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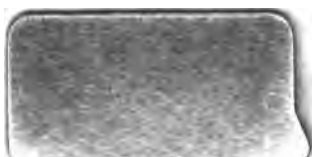
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HOW HE WON HER.

A Novel.

BY
MRS. EILOART,
AUTHOR OF

"THE CURATE'S DISCIPLINE," "JUST A WOMAN,"
"THE LOVE THAT LIVED," "SOME OF OUR GIRLS," ETC., ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.
VOL. II.



London:
SAMUEL TINSLEY & CO.,
10, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND.

1879.

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HOW HE WON HER.



CHAPTER I.

MR. SNARK'S DISAPPEARANCE.

MATTERS went on very pleasantly, as far as the courtship of Mrs. Thwaites and Mr. Snark was concerned. Mr. Snark was as attentive a lover as could be expected, under the circumstances ; and Mrs. Thwaites was a sensible woman, and did not expect to be courted in the fashion she had been wooed two-and-twenty years before. She was very much offended with Mary Ann Smith for refusing Richard, but, on the whole, satisfied with the result. Dick

might now have one of the Misses Snark, and either young lady would be a more suitable match for him than the daughter of a schoolmistress.

So several months passed by, and, the period of delay stipulated by Mr. Snark being near its expiration, Mrs. Thwaites bought herself a wedding-dress of pale grey silk, and a Leghorn bonnet, quite as large as the one with which the Duchess of Oldenberg had startled London. She was undecided about the trimming of the bonnet, whether it should be decorated with a bird of paradise plume, or a wreath of blush roses, when an event occurred which made her think of very different matters to trimming bonnets, or, rather, feel that the most suitable one she could wear would be crape, like that of her widowhood, for evermore.

Mr. Snark vanished, disappeared, evaporated. He was too stout to dissolve into thin air ; but if he had done so, there could

hardly have been fewer traces of him. His daughters had not gone too, for one had married a short time before, and Mrs. Thwaites had been at the breakfast, which was a very grand affair indeed for Thorpe Leigh ; and Mr. Snark had then made allusions to a coming change in his own condition, which had made Mrs. Thwaites look down on her plate, and then hold up her fan to her face. She found now what the change had been that Mr. Snark really intended.

That breakfast had set everybody talking in Thorpe Leigh. Middle-class people, sixty years ago, lived and married in a much less pretentious style than they do now. But the very wedding-cake had come from London, and so had the greater part of the bride's wardrobe. People were altogether dazzled and bewildered by the affair; but they were a great deal more bewildered when Mr. Snark had gone, and it was found how he had left things behind him.

Miss Snark's husband was to have had two thousand pounds with her, but the money had never been paid, and there was not much likelihood, now, that it ever would be. But he had his wife, as she told him ; and, what was more, he had her sister too.

Mr. Snark had sent his unmarried daughter on a visit to her sister, three days before he left ; and now the young lady was there, in positive ignorance, she declared, of her father's whereabouts, and with no other place to go to. So Mr. Stimson, her new brother-in-law, found he had a sister as well as a wife on his hands. But he was not so badly off as many.

Messrs. Grimsby and Tarne, Guy's employers, suffered heavily through Mr. Snark's departure. They had accepted bills for him, and advanced him money ; and now he had gone, and the bills were likely to be dishonoured, and the money they would certainly never see again.

This was terrible for them. They had had one or two losses of late ; and now, this trouble coming upon them, they had little hope of escaping bankruptcy. They lowered their staff, they took harder work on themselves, and Guy, being the last new-comer in the office, was dismissed with two others.

Then it was found that Mr. Snark was heavily in debt to his tradesmen—the very wedding-breakfast, with the exception of the wonderful cake, was not paid for.

But all this was nothing to the position of Mrs. Thwaites. She had not only lost a husband—which, as Dick said, was a thing to be thankful for—but she had lost all her money. She had nothing left but the remains of her last quarter's income—Mr. Snark had always paid her interest duly—and her house and furniture. What ever had become of the money she had trusted Mr. Snark with, no one knew, unless it was Mr. Snark himself.

Mrs. Thwaites was in despair. She did not know whether she grieved most for the loss of her husband, or of her money. Dick was really sorry for the loss of the latter, though, with his usual cheerful philosophy, he said that one trouble almost made up for the other. His mother would get on much better without Snark than with him, and he would work for her.

But how was the work to be obtained? By this time Dick had served his articles, and there was what was then the mere farce of an examination to be gone through—a few legal forms, a little money to be spent, and Mr. Richard Thwaites, gentleman, would be on the roll of solicitors and attorneys, and duly entitled to practise as such.

But then, where were the clients to come from?

‘Everybody in Thorpe Leigh knows that I know nothing, as far as the law goes,’

said Dick to Guy ; ' and I can't make up, as Snark did, by roguery and brass, for what I don't know in law. I don't think I'm worth a pound a week as copying-clerk, even if Quail and Flint would keep me, which they won't.'

Dick and Guy had a very long talk after this ; and the end of it was that Dick wrote to his father's brother, who was a builder and carpenter in London, asking for employment in any way that he could give it him, and stating exactly how his mother had been left.

He did not tell Mrs. Thwaites about this, as she was very much prejudiced against Mr. John Thwaites, who was a plain-spoken man, not at all ' genteel,' and apt to snub people whose pretensions were what he considered above their station.

Dick got an answer in due time, to the effect that his uncle could give him work

as clerk and overlooker to his men ; that he did not expect to find him worth much, but would give him a trial on account of their relationship ; but, at the same time, he must remember that business was one thing, and relationship another, and, when once Dick was in his employ, he should show him no favour because he was his nephew. He should give him fifteen shillings a week—not that he considered he would be worth it, but because he did not well think Dick could live upon less.

Dick called on Guy with this letter, and handed it to him.

‘You can’t call *that* very affectionate,’ he said. ‘It’s clear he *doesn’t* mean to let relationship interfere with business.’

‘He’s giving you a start,’ said Guy, ‘and it’s best to put the thing plainly. What do you mean to do?’

‘Take it, of course. I was born for a builder. Nothing would have pleased me

better, you see, than to have been apprenticed to my uncle. But he wasn't genteel enough for my mother. I'd rather run up a ladder, with a hod on my shoulder, than sit grinding away at Quail and Flint's, with pen and paper. I hate the confinement—I hate the work—I hate the law. I'll do anything my uncle sets me to do. I don't suppose I shall have to carry the hod, but I will if need be. Did you see his post-script? He turned over the letter, and read it to Guy. 'He says he hopes he shan't find I'm spoiled for a gentleman, and fit for nothing else. He doesn't seem very hopeful, does he? Well, you'll see I shall disappoint and surprise him. My mother doesn't like the notion, but she feels, herself, she must give in. She is going to take the new curate and the doctor's assistant as lodgers. The house is her own—at least, it's mine, so it all comes to the same thing; and I shall leave her my bit of money—

that five hundred my father left me in the Consols. The interest won't be much, but it will help ; and I'll send her whatever I can.'

'Out of fifteen shillings a week?' asked Guy.

'Oh, well, it doesn't take much to keep a fellow ; and Uncle John is sure to give me more after a time. What's the use of having a mother if one doesn't take care of her ? And now, Guy, what do you purpose doing ? Shall we go up to London, and seek our fortunes together ?'

'The very thing, Dick ! Mrs. Glynne, or her son, for her, has got me a berth in town, and I was coming to tell you about it. We'll not only seek our fortunes, but start housekeeping, together, if you like. I shall be in the city, at Orr and Reid's—your Uncle John is at Somers Town ; so we can easily find lodgings that will suit us both,

and be within easy distance of both our places of work.'

'I don't think we shall start on equal terms, Guy,' said Dick. 'You'll be a richer man than I.'

'I'm to have thirty shillings a week at first; but I shall have to be pretty careful, Dick. You know what I have in view. Don't be afraid—I shan't lead you into much extravagance.'

'I shall be very glad to be with you, Guy; and there's no doubt we can do the thing cheaper together than apart. And there's one thing, too, you might help me in. Two pair of eyes are better than one. I shall take you with me when I call on Mary Ann's aunt. I've a parcel to carry from Mrs. Smith to her. Well, perhaps we may come across—*him*, you know.'

'*Him*? No, I don't indeed,' said Guy, who had forgotten all about Dick's love affairs; '*him*—who do you mean?'

‘Why, the—the—the other fellow, you know—the one Mary Ann likes better than me.’

‘Well, I think you might leave her to get him for herself,’ said Guy; ‘I don’t see that it’s any business of yours.’

‘Oh, if you come to that, we should none of us ever do a good turn by another,’ said Dick; ‘and who is one to do a good turn for, if not for the girl one’s fond of?’

‘It’s a queer way of showing fondness,’ said Guy. ‘I don’t think it would be my way.’

‘Wait till your turn comes; you don’t know what love is till you’ve tried it,’ said Dick, with all the authority of experience. ‘You’ll see, Guy, the old lady will be sure to take to us—especially to you—somehow every one does, and she’ll ask us to tea on Sundays. Good-natured old ladies have a way of doing it with young men they want

to keep out of mischief ; and Miss Watts is very good-natured, by what Mrs. Smith tells me. Of course we'll go, and then we'll look out for *him*—he's likely to drop in, too. We shall be sure to find him out. The old lady will be talking about the time her dear great-niece was with her ; or perhaps we shall hear of their going to the play together. One way or another, the murder's sure to come out——'

'And when it does come out, what will you do ?' asked Guy, thinking, with every word Dick spoke, what a silly little chit Mary Ann Smith must have been to have thrown up such a good fellow as his friend Dick.

'Can't say till it *is* out,' answered Dick.

'When we've found the man, and seen what he's like, then we shall know better how to manage the business. I shall never be easy, you know, till Mary Ann's got him.'

‘She had better have you, a thousand times over,’ said Guy.

‘Ah! but she doesn’t think so,’ replied Dick, with a mournful shake of his head; ‘and if she can’t be happy in my way, why I must try and make her happy in her own. I should think, Guy, when I have got him for her—not that I am going to set up any claims to her gratitude, or that sort of stuff—she’ll feel a little like—like liking me, you know; as if I was a cousin, or a fatherly sort of a friend—or—or—something of that sort, you know.’

‘She’ll be a brute if she doesn’t,’ said Guy.

And then Dick, having many farewell visits to pay, and many small affairs to wind up, went his way; and left Guy free to prepare for a visit he meditated paying that evening.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST INSTALMENT.

IT was pouring with rain that night, though Dick Thwaites had hurried off through it, to transact some of his many affairs ; it was dull, cold, dark, and grizzly, but it seemed to suit Dick all the better. He was battling with the weather, just as he meant to battle through his life. It set him in a glow, made him look fresher and better-tempered than ever ; so that every one said that they should be very sorry to lose him ; and Thorpe Leigh would not seem like itself without him.

Dick was always popular. Every one

liked him ; unless perhaps it was his employers, who said that he was the dullest articulated clerk they had ever had. Dick's *forte* did not lie in that direction. As he said, he was born for a builder. He could do almost anything about a house. And if not very ready with a pen, he was clever with a pencil, and could, in a rough way, draw almost anything, from a caricature of Mr. Snark, to an elevation for a new town-hall. So that Dick was in high spirits with the prospect opening before him. He went last to Mrs. Smith's. She was as kind to him as ever ; perhaps not having yet given up the hope that he might be her son-in-law. As to the loss of his mother's money, Mrs. Smith did not trouble herself much about that. Mr. Richard Thwaites would make his way, she said to her daughters, and would do well in the world, let him turn his hand to whatever he might. She was very

pleased to see Dick to-night ; told him he must stay to supper ; and called her daughters in. All the school-girls had gone to bed by the time Dick had arrived, with the exception of a few elder ones, who were considered old enough to take charge of themselves in the schoolroom. Mary Ann came in, looking very forlorn and unhappy. She knew from Mrs. Glynne that Guy was going to leave the town, and she had been fretting in consequence. At least, she thought she was fretting. L. E. L. had not yet risen, to teach every young lady that it was her duty to have a pet little secret sorrow ; but Byron had done mischief enough in his way, and Tom Moore not much good. So Mary Ann, believing in love as the be-all and end-all of a woman's life, had selected Guy as the object of her affections ; and the romance, as she thought it, of his history made her like him all the more. And then his not caring

for her beyond simple friendliness, gave the charm of sentimental misery to her love for him. And yet there were times when she found herself thinking of Dick, and how good and how kind he was, and wishing that he had not red hair, and was not always in such good spirits ; and then, if he had only spoken a little sooner, and Guy had not been in the way, why there is no telling what might have happened.

But to-night Dick disappointed her. He was full of plans for his future, and seemed absorbed in the thought of going to London. He said very significantly that he should call on Miss Watts the very first Sunday he could manage it. He looked at Mary Ann while he said this, and thought she would understand him. But she was only surprised that he should care to call on any one so uninteresting as a good-natured old lady like her aunt. Then he ate a very good supper, and

seemed to enjoy it—especially the pickled onions. Mary Ann thought he could not be fretting on her account ; or he could not enjoy his supper so much—and pickled onions too ! If she had only known Guy was just as fond of them as Dick ! When he got up to go, Mrs. Smith shook hands very warmly with him, gave him the little parcel for Miss Watts, and a long letter for the old lady as well. Postage was worth saving in those days. Then he took leave of Mary Ann's elder sisters, and last, of Mary Ann herself ; Mrs. Smith considerately calling to her other daughters to put the pickles and the lump-sugar away.

‘ I dare say I shall see *him* in town,’ said Dick ; ‘ I'll find him out, never you fear.’

‘ Don't—don't—don't,’ said Mary Ann. ‘ You can do nothing for me.’

‘ That remains to be seen. I'll do my best. I shall never be contented, Mary

Ann, till I've made you as happy as you deserve to be.'

Then he gave her hand a desperate squeeze, but she did not mind the pain, and, as he left the house, Mary Ann went into her own room, and indulged in the luxury of a hearty cry. It was not all on Guy's account. What a good fellow, she said to herself, Dick Thwaites was, though he did like pickled onions; and what a pity it was that she could not care for him, as she cared for Guy.

And meanwhile, Guy, who had not a thought to spare for love or for Mary Ann, was making preparations in his own room for the very important visit that he had to pay.

He was counting over his money as carefully and anxiously as ever Reuben Deane, next door, could do. When he had put aside enough for his journey to London, the expenses of the first week, and a parting

gift to Mrs. Glynne, he should have just fifty pounds left. How he had saved and stinted to get that fifty pounds together !

It was the first instalment of the debt his father had left behind him, and he was going that night to take it to Reuben Deane, his father's heaviest creditor. He counted the money over and over again ; he put it in piles of ten ; he looked at it lovingly. What a hard fight he had had to get it together ! How many self-denials he had practised ! That hundred pounds represented a victory over himself, over fate, over Reuben Deane, the man who had been his father's most pitiless creditor.

He put it together in a small bag, then carefully in the inside pocket of his coat, buttoned it up closely, and, looking as glad and triumphant as the happiest lover in the world could look, he stepped down the stairs, and then into the small parlour, where

Mrs. Glynné sat sewing the winter evening hours away.

He stepped in, looking so happy and handsome that her eyes brightened as she looked upon him.

‘I am going, ma’am, going with the first instalment.’

‘It is a proud night for you, Guy,’ she said.

‘And I should never have been able to take it so soon if it had not been for you, ma’am. You have made my little earnings work such wonders. Good-bye. I don’t suppose Mr. Deane will keep me very long.’

‘Guy,’ she said wistfully, ‘speak gently to the old man. He is old, and he means well, as I have reason to know.’

Guy’s face took the hard look it sometimes wore when Reuben Deane’s name was mentioned.

‘It is only a matter of business, ma’am, and a very few words will suffice.’

Then she heard her own door close, and in another second the whole street resounded with Guy's vigorous knock on the door of Reuben Deane.

CHAPTER III.

REUBEN DEANE'S TWO VISITORS.

IN the dingy room where he had received Mrs. Glynne, Reuben Deane was employed alone this evening.

Eunice was upstairs in a sitting-room that her uncle had had prepared for her. She was almost fifteen now, and he did not choose her to be so much in his place of business as she had formerly been. Sometimes he went up and sat with her ; and, on days when he thought no one was likely to come, he would have her in her old corner, while he wrote his letters or cast up the long columns of figures in his account-books.

The old man looked worn and tired. As the rain battered against the window-panes, he shivered. The dreariness without seemed to affect him. There was nothing bright or cheerful in the room to counteract it, and Reuben Deane's own thoughts were gloomy enough.

His evening's work might have put him in better humour, too. *He*, at least, had suffered nothing by Mr. Snark's roguery, and there were not many business men in the town who could have said as much. His books showed increasing prosperity; everything he touched seemed to turn to gold.

He was by far the wealthiest man in Thorpe Leigh, and he had been brought up in its workhouse. That was what he was thinking, as he sat looking at the dull fire smouldering slowly on the hearth. How rich he was! What bonds he held—what mortgages on fair lands—what sums lent

at interest—what a portion, if he chose, he could give to his sister's grandchild! He might make her, as far as money went, a match for the proudest in the county. How he had prospered and thriven—and withal, how poor he was!

What had his gold done for him? The two women he had loved best in all the world had died, each loving another better than himself. Dead sister—buried love! What remained of either? That pale, ailing girl upstairs, who, let him spend what he might upon her, was only slowly gaining the health and strength that the labourers' children around seemed to have as a birthright. Would that all this wealth could only make her fair and bright and nimble as other children were!

He had set his mind upon gold—said that it was the one thing needful—and striven, as hard as men rarely strive for heaven, to win it. And having won,

what had it given him? Not the love of Lucy Chalcombe. She had preferred comparative poverty to the wealth he had offered her. Friendship, companionship—nothing, nothing of all these! He had resolved to win money, and he had won it—ten times more gold than he had ever counted on.

And the gold was like dead leaves, now. He had never looked for flowers till the time for gathering them was past. He had thought that gold was to do everything, and behold, it would do nothing. He was not a bad man, but he had been a wofully mistaken one.

When Guy Thurstone's knock sounded on the door, he looked up in a little amazement, wondering who it could be at this hour. It was too late for any one to call on business, and his visitors were very few. He could hardly believe his eyes when Guy came in. What could the young fellow want with him at this hour?

‘You look surprised to see me, Mr. Deane,’ said Guy, bluntly; ‘but it has not been my fault that I have not been here long before, and on the same errand.’

‘You are very welcome now, and you would have been welcome sooner had you come—let your errand be what it may,’ answered Reuben Deane.

‘My errand is one that generally makes a man welcome,’ said Guy. ‘I have come to pay you money, Mr. Deane.’

‘You owe me nothing,’ Guy Thurstone,’ replied the other.

‘My father did, however, and I am his only son. I told you, soon after he died, that I should never be satisfied till I had cleared his name by paying every penny that he owed. I don’t know how long it will be before I am able to keep my word to the full; but I bring you a small instalment of the debt to-night. I have been going thoroughly over my father’s affairs,

Mr. Deane, and I find from his other creditors that you have bought up all their claims upon him, so that, in fact, you are now the only creditor with whom I have to deal. Is it not so ?

Reuben Deane nodded assent.

‘I don’t know why you have done it, I am sure. You have certainly not been very urgent in your claims. The amount owing to you is, I think, eleven hundred and fifty pounds ?’

Again Reuben Deane answered mutely.

‘Well, I have brought you fifty of it to-night. Please to give a receipt for it. You shall have more as soon as I can earn it. Count the money—you will find it all right.’

Guy handed him the little bag that held his hard-won treasure, and the old man took it almost mechanically, counted it carefully, poised one or two of the sovereigns on his finger as if to test their weight,

then took the bag to an iron chest enclosed within a stout oaken cupboard, and locked the money up carefully.

‘I’ll trouble you for my receipt,’ said Guy.

‘You shall have it—never fear.’ Reuben Deane sat down to his desk, and began writing. Then he looked up. ‘You must have worked hard and lived closely to have got that money together from your little salary?’

‘I have done book-keeping for some of the shopkeepers in the evening,’ answered Guy; ‘I have sometimes written Mr. Penroyd’s sermons fairly out for him. That has all brought in a little more; and Mrs. Glynne has been very good to me. I should be ashamed to tell you what a very little she will let me pay her for my board.’

‘Ay, ay—she is a generous woman,’ answered Reuben Deane. ‘You won’t meet with another like her in London.

And, with it all, you've only got fifty pounds together. There is more than a thousand left. It will take you years and years to collect the rest, and in London a young fellow wants to spend money. There is the play, and Vauxhall—you won't be content to spend your evenings in the hum-drum fashion you have spent them here. And by-and-by you will want to marry—it is only natural—how about the money then ?

‘ I can earn more money in London than I have done here, and I dare say I can do without the play, or Vauxhall. As to marrying, I have never thought of it—I never *will* think of it, till you or your heirs have given me a receipt in full for the last pound my father owed you.’

‘ You will be as old, by that time, as I was when I went wooing—Lucy Chalcombe. You will meet with the same answer that Lucy Chalcombe gave me.

Life will go before you have begun to enjoy it.'

'That may be, though I think I enjoy life pretty well as it is,' said Guy, to whom, with his perfect health and vigorous frame, mere existence was a pleasure. 'But I'll do what I think is right—no man shall ever be able to say my father wronged him.' Then presently, after a little pause, Guy said, 'So you wanted my mother, Mr. Deane? And she would not have you. Was that the reason you were so hard upon my father?'

'I did want your mother, Guy Thurstone. I suppose I look a strange old fellow to go courting, but I was not *quite* so old two and twenty years ago. Well, she did not care for me—perhaps that was not to be wondered at; but still I have sometimes thought that if her brother had not jeered and flouted me as he did, spoken of me, and *to* me, as the money-lender whose soul was

in his bags, I might have had a different answer. She was a dear, good, gentle girl, who valued kindness, and had little of it at home. She did not think of your father as a lover, remember, at that time. I think I could have made her happy—I might have won her liking in time—but it was not to be. She did not love me enough to set her brother at defiance, as she did for your father's sake. A few words from Squire Chalcombe, and she might have been my wife, and a happy one. I bore no ill-will to your father. If he had asked for time he should have had it. But he was as proud and as hard as you. I never knew till it was too late how hard he was beset ; and I was not his only creditor, remember——'

There came another knock at the door, louder and more imperative than even Guy's had been, and Hannah was heard

muttering at people coming so late. Then she opened the door, and said :

‘Mr. Chalcombe says he must see ye, though I told him you had some one with you.’

‘Show Mr. Chalcombe in, by all means,’ said Reuben Deane ; and his eyes brightened as he spoke, but his teeth were set together as he said between them : ‘Perhaps it wouldn’t be so bad a thing for him if he had the money-lender for his brother-in-law now. Good-evening, Mr. Chalcombe. Come on the same errand as your nephew here ? He has brought me the first instalment of his father’s debt. I was just about to make out the receipt.’

The Squire had been riding hard, and perhaps drinking a little on the way. His gaiters were splashed up to the knee. He was flushed and heated, though the night was so rainy and cold, and his many-caped greatcoat was streaming with wet. He

took it off, and flung it on the back of a chair as he said: 'I am in no humour for fooling, Deane. I know nothing of my nephew, as you call him; but I've come from Bath, where those two old harri-dans——'

There he stopped, as if it was hardly prudent to say more.

'The two old harridans—the Misses Chalcombe, I suppose?—are not inclined to advance you money for the interest that is now six weeks overdue.'

'Don't you miscal! my sisters, sir,' said the Squire, 'whatever I may do. They won't lend me the money, it's true—still—they are ladies, sir, ladies of good position and family, and are not to be lightly spoken of by such as you.—Now then, young sir, what are you staring at? If your business with Mr. Deane is done, I should be glad to have a word with him.'

'*My* business is not yet done, with your

nephew, Mr. Chalcombe. He is leaving Thorpe Leigh in a day or two, as perhaps you know, and I should have been glad to have had a little further talk with him before he went. *Your* business, sir, I take it, is either to pay me the interest that is now six weeks overdue, or to ask for yet further delay. In either case it can be settled in five minutes.'

Mr. Chalcombe looked puzzled, and then furious, at the quiet self-assertion of Reuben Deane's manner. Then, turning contemptuously from Guy, he said :

'You must wait a month longer. I shall get it in that time. That is what I came to say.'

'And if I don't wait?' asked Reuben Deane, looking keenly at him.

The Squire's flushed face grew pale. Then he said sneeringly :

'You won't kill the goose that lays the golden eggs, just yet. In another month,

I tell you, the money shall be paid. I had one or two other matters to talk over, but they can wait. I am not disposed to take this young fellow here into my confidence. So he is going to London. I wonder he didn't go, before. It would have been better for him than Thorpe Leigh, I should have thought, where every one knows how the Thurstones were sold up, neck and crop.'

'A fate that is not at all likely to befall the Chalcombes,' said Reuben Deane, with his eyes fixed on the ground.

The Squire looked at him uneasily.

'You can't mean that, you know. It would never pay. Well, good-night;' and, turning to Guy, 'So you have taken it on you to pay your father's debts. Brought the first five pounds, I suppose,' he added coarsely. 'Did you think his name worth it?'

Reuben Deane looked up with a curious

smile, and wrote away at his desk ; while, in answer to the Squire, his nephew said :

‘ If you were a younger man, and a sober one, I should feel tempted to knock you down for doubting it. Yes, even though you are my mother’s brother. Pay your own debts, Squire Chalcombe, and leave me to pay my father’s.’

‘ Here is your receipt, Guy Thurstone,’ said Reuben Deane. ‘ Squire, would you like to look at the amount ? It’s a little more than five pounds, you see.’

Mr. Chalcombe took it in his hand, looked at it as if he could hardly believe his eyes, brought the paper to the candle, read it again, and then, turning to his nephew, said, with something that was almost like civility :

‘ That’s not bad of you, youngster. But how the devil did you manage to do it ? Upon my word, Deane, it seems not such a

bad thing to have a son, after all. I should like to have one to pay *my* debts.'

'Are you sure that he would do it, Squire?' said Reuben Deane, with something very like a sneer on his thin lips. 'Like father like son, you know; and you gentlemen take debt much more easily than the plain farmers of whom young Thurstone comes. Oh, I forgot—he's a Chalcombe, too, on his mother's side.'

'I will say good-night, sir,' said Guy to Reuben Deane; and then, moved he knew not by what impulse, he held out his hand to the old man, who took it quietly; then, stiffly and coldly he said good-night to the Squire, and left the two together.

'Now that youngster has gone, I have something to tell you,' said Mr. Chalcombe, 'that I didn't want him to hear. I have heard—and on tolerable authority—that Glynne—Frederick Glynne, you know—who, unluckily for himself, was a client of

yours, has been seen in London. I thought you had something against him.'

'I have something against a great many people, Squire—they never pay their debts, and they speak ill of their creditor,' said Reuben Deane, dryly. 'Glynne is, or was, a near friend of yours, I take it? You had a good deal in common.'

'Debts and ill-luck,' said the Squire; 'I don't know of much besides.'

'Aye, but you were friends, after the fashion of fine gentlemen. Glynne—if Glynne is still living—may remember that, and you may see something of him. If you do, drop a hint that if he has any regard for himself, the farther he keeps from Thorpe Leigh, and the less he troubles his wife, the better.'

'You have a great regard for Mrs. Glynne,' said Mr. Chalcombe, sneeringly.

'I am sorry for her. I am sorry for many women who are married to fine

gentlemen who ill-use them. I am sorry for Mrs. Chalcombe.'

'You are an insolent old hound!' said the Squire. 'If——'

'If you didn't owe me money, you'd punish me for my insolence. I know all about it, Mr. Chalcombe. But you *do* owe me money, and I am safe from broken bones. Good-night, Squire. Go home to your wife. I'll give you the grace you have hardly been civil enough to ask for, for her sake. Good-night, sir.'

CHAPTER IV.

THE PARTING WITH HER PRINCE.

WHEN Guy Thurstone went into the passage that led to Reuben Deane's street-door, he saw, coming down the stairs, a slight, tall figure, clothed in sober grey, and with a lamp in her hand ; and looking nearer, he saw that that was Eunice Clare. She had left off her irons for some time. She had grown taller and stronger, and, if she could not move as nimbly and gracefully as other girls, still she could no longer be called a cripple, or infirm.

She was not a pretty girl at all—no bright colour or waving curls, no glow of

girlish bloom and light about her. A sad face, pale and wan with the memory of pain and suffering only just overpassed; great dark eyes; a mass of dark hair, gathered in a loose knot, fastened by a comb behind. She was thin and angular, with a look beyond her years, as if made prematurely old by pain.

She came down softly and quietly, and stepped up to Guy, laying her long thin hand upon his arm.

‘Hannah told me you were here, and I wanted to see you before you left Thorpe Leigh. They tell me you are going away from us,’ she said, with a little eagerness in her tone, and a little flush on her cheek.

‘Yes, I am leaving in two or three days,’ said Guy. ‘I am glad to see you, and say good-bye before I go.’

‘And I am glad to see you. You have always been so kind.’

‘I—I—kind!’ stammered Guy. ‘Why, I have had no chance. I would have been if I could, but——’

‘Yes, you *have* been kind,’ said Eunice, firmly. ‘Oh ! you don’t know what it is to be a plain girl and crippled, and the only person in the world who loved you the laughing-stock of the whole town, just because he wished others to do as justly by him, as he did by them. You have never jeered me for my uncle’s sake, or my own. You have always been kind to me, from the time when we came to see you, and you were in such trouble, in your desolate old home, and you carried me out in your arms to the chaise at the door. Do you think I have forgotten it? I was such an ugly little thing, and you were as tender as if I had been a princess in a fairy-tale.’

‘Why, what else could I be?’ asked Guy. ‘You were such a poor little thing. I

should have broken you to pieccs if I hadn't been gentle with you.'

'And I hope you will not think very hardly of my uncle. He can be so good and kind,' she pleaded. 'And I know he has had troubles—oh, great troubles—in his life! and but for me, it would have been a very lonely one. And I am not much, you know.'

'I think you are. I think you are a very good girl, and I am glad to see you are growing so strong and so well,' said Guy, heartily.

'I am very sorry you are going to leave us, and yet I am glad of it,' she said, smiling; and then her eyes brightened, and her pale cheeks flushed. Guy thought she was 'by no means so plain as he had considered her. 'London is the right place for you. You will make your way—you will be a rich man, and a good one. But you will come back to us after a bit,' she continued, lean-

ing forward and looking at him with reverent, uplifted eyes, as if indeed she had been a princess in a fairy-tale, and was sending her chosen knight on his quest for fame.

Her thin long fingers rested on Guy's brown sturdy hand. Without knowing it, he had placed his other hand upon them, and he was bending forward, feeling as if the faith this girl felt in him, her undoubting trust that he *must* be good, and keep good and pure, and all that a brave, honest man should be, was enough to make him so.

'I hope so,' he said presently. 'I don't know about the riches, but I'll try my best for the rest. And I will come back to Thorpe Leigh sooner or later, and—and—no one who cares for me, Eunice Clare, shall ever feel ashamed or sorry for their caring,' he said softly, with a strange tremor in his voice, caused by the girl's earnestness, which, child as she was, had in its intensity

woke up something in Guy Thurstone's heart that never slept again.

And then the door of Reuben Deane's office opened, and Mr. Chalcombe and he came out. The Squire looked very curiously at the pair — Reuben Deane very intently, with a strange lightening of the face.

Guy felt awkward and shamefaced. If Eunice had not been such a child, they would have suspected him of sweethearting, was his thought. Eunice was perfectly calm and self-possessed.

'I am saying good-bye to Mr. Thurstone, uncle. He has always been very kind to me, you know.'

Reuben bent his head in assent, and, without a word, opened the street-door for his visitors.

The Squire seemed struck with a sudden access of civility to his nephew. Perhaps it had occurred to him that that nephew might

not have far to go or long to woo when he wished for a wealthy wife.

‘Hark ye, young fellow,’ he said. ‘Before you go to London, Mrs. Chalcombe might like to see you. She was always very kind to your mother before she made a fool of herself. If you can spare an hour, you may as well come over to the Grange at lunch-time.’

Guy’s face flushed.

‘I thank you, sir. Last time I came to your house I was pretty well turned out of it.’

‘As your mother was before you, Guy Thurstone,’ said Reuben Deane’s harsh voice, ‘because she chose to marry an honest man who made her a good husband—I do Richard Thurstone justice—though he was not the only honest man who would have done so. Bide your time, Guy Thurstone—bide your time, and some day you may go to the Grange without waiting

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for any one's bidding. Good-night, Squire,' he added, in so stern a tone that Mr. Chalcombe felt almost startled, and, muttering anything but civilities between his teeth, went out, followed by Guy.

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST DAY IN LONDON.

SIXTY years ago, London was a much pleasanter place to live in than it is now. Fancy being within easy walking-distance of the best shops, the national theatres, the leading thoroughfares ; and yet able, on the other hand, even if possessed of only moderate pedestrian powers, to get out into the green fields, and bring home bunches of buttercups or clusters of wild roses, to lighten up one's home in the London streets.

London had no gas, certainly ; but then, never having had gas, nobody missed it.

The oil-lamps answered their purpose out of doors, and candles were burnt within. People were satisfied, because they had never known anything better, and were troubled with no fears of explosions. There were neither cabs nor omnibuses, but then people walked, which was cheaper and more healthy.

There were the venerable hackney-carriages for state occasions and rainy days, but there were no trams to damage the wheels of one's brougham, and ensure a harvest of repairs to the coach-builders. One could have friends then, and go to see them without giving up a day to the purpose. Everybody, nowadays, is so far away from everybody else ; the fatigue of life, through the very locomotion required to see a little of people and places, is so great ; London is not one city, but a dozen, all compressed together, and each growing larger and larger, and swallowing up green fields

and trees, till it seems as if soon all England would be simply one vast metropolis.

And life, in many ways, was pleasanter in the first quarter of the century than it is now. 'People lived more simply, and, in many things, more cheaply. It was possible for middle-class people to be seen in the pit of a theatre, and so they went more often, especially as 'the play,' at one house or another, was within an easy walking-distance for most Londoners. And the play *was* the play! Why have they done away with the green curtain, which left the imagination free to picture all sorts of mysteries and splendours behind it? What proscenium with dancing nymphs and piping shepherds, and impossible shepherdesses, has ever equalled it? Now, there is no pit worth speaking of; and the stalls, who have taken the place that before was given up to the thorough playgoers, are so genteel and frigid, that not Kean himself could

make their languor to rise at him nowadays.

Dick and Guy had agreed to unite their slender means, and had taken lodgings in Chalton Street, Somers Town. The situation suited them very well. It was cheap, to begin with, and cheapness was indispensable. They were near to Dick's work, and not too far for Guy to walk to the City. Young men *could* walk at that time of day ; and it was a much better thing for their health, both of mind and body, to do so regularly, as a matter of course, than to go to and fro by train every day ; think half a mile a tremendous exertion ; and then, when their annual holiday comes, make up for the laziness of eleven months by climbing up Mont Blanc, or falling down the Matterhorn, in the twelfth. But then, sixty years ago, annual holidays were things undreamed of. People had their Sundays, Christmas Day, and Good Fri-

day ; and what did young men who had their living to get, or older men who had to provide for their families, want with more ? But with Hampstead Heath, and Highgate Hill, and Hornsey Wood on one hand, and the commons of Clapham and Camberwell on the other ; and fields with wild roses growing in them within easy reach of High Holborn, people lived their lives from year to year without finding little annual visits to the sea indispensable to their doing so.

Dick's uncle lived near old St. Pancras Church. There was a row of eight-roomed houses on the same side as the churchyard, and between that and Brewer Street. They had small gardens in front, and were inhabited by respectable people, mostly retired tradesmen with small means. Tradesmen *did* retire early then, and upon incomes, on which no tradesman, unless prematurely disabled, would think of retiring

now. The number, fast decreasing, however, of six or eight-roomed houses, with gardens of varying proportions, and stables with just accommodation enough for the 'one-horse shay,' and the one horse to draw it, that yet remain in all the old-world suburbs that were country sixty years ago, were then occupied by men who had made what they thought enough to retire upon, and having given up their business to a son, or sold it to a foreman, had gone to spend the rest of their days within an easy coach-drive of the familiar streets and shops. Dick's uncle had not retired; but this neighbourhood suited him well. Houses were fast rising in every direction, and here he was on the spot to build them.

Dick took Guy to call on his uncle the evening after they had arrived in London. Dick had said that he would have the first day to himself, and had tried to persuade Guy to make holiday as well. Guy had

decidedly refused. He was expected to present himself at the counting-house of Messrs. Orr and Reid that day, and he was going to do so. He went, and found Mr. George Glynne, to whom he presented himself; a rather stiff, and very proper-looking young man. He was the junior member of the firm now, having become so in honour of his approaching marriage with the daughter of the head partner. It was a very suitable match. George Glynne was so well-connected, and so sure to make his way in the world; and the young lady had a nice little fortune, and good expectations. Mr. George Glynne was not very genial—it was not his way; but he had a great idea of doing his duty by every one—not forgetting himself. He was very civil to Guy—*that* was his duty as Guy had been recommended to the firm by George's mother, and was the nephew of Squire Chalcombe, of the Grange. Mrs. Glynne

knew her son George, and she had made the most of the relationship which Guy himself disdained to do. He showed him himself his desk in the counting-house, and introduced him to the head-clerk. He asked after his mother, and said he hoped he should find time, before long, to go and see her ; and then, feeling that he had done everything that was right and proper, went away to his own apartment.

Guy thought London a very dingy place as he walked home through the City Road. Pentonville, with the large gardens before the houses, and the public-houses, with their benches and tables in front, where wayfarers, on their road to merry Islington, might rest, was a little better. The New Road was better still. The houses were good, and tall, altogether unlike any to be seen in country towns ; and there was a continuous stream of people which made him feel he really was in the great Babel.

But still it was altogether different from the London he had pictured. Not so, Dick. He had made the most of *his* day. He had seen the Tower, and Buckingham Palace, Guildhall, Cheapside, and the fine new Regent Street, about which every one had heard so much in the country. He had had his pocket picked, but caught the thief, and sent him off with a clout on the head. That was in Seven Dials, where a black-eyed Jewess had tried hard to induce him to buy a real Bandanna for two-and-sixpence ; and a greasy Jew had tried equally hard to induce him to purchase a young terrier, good at rats, for seven-and-sixpence. Dick had resisted these temptations ; gone from east to west, dined, stared at shops, been nearly run over half-a-dozen times, and had come home, as fresh as when he had started, and very eager to wind up the day at one of the theatres, but not certain whether he should go to see Mrs.

Siddons at Covent Garden, or Grimaldi at Sadler's Wells.

‘Neither one nor the other,’ said Guy, as he sat down to their very frugal tea. ‘In the first place, we’ve no money to spare for the play ; in the next, you’ll offend your uncle if you don’t go to him at once.’

Dick was very anxious to ‘see the play,’ but Guy over-ruled him; and so they presented themselves duly, at seven o’clock, at the house of Mr. John Thwaites, builder and contractor, in Old St. Pancras Road, Somers Town.

CHAPTER VI.

DICK'S UNCLE JOHN.

MR. JOHN THWAITES was at home, smoking in his parlour. He had a clay pipe, and a glass of ale. Mrs. John Thwaites was sitting opposite, mending a basketful of stockings ; and a neighbour had dropped in to have a talk about the news of the day, and a pipe, in company with Mr. Thwaites.

Mrs. John Thwaites had no drawing-room. She was a buxom, rosy, good-tempered woman, who had been a servant before her marriage, and was not ashamed, now, to help her one small maid in the work of the house, and to cook her husband's

dinner herself. She was not at all genteel, neither was her husband ; and they were both rather in awe of their nephew, whom they expected to find a fine gentleman, but whom, not the less, they had thought it their duty to help, when he applied to them.

Their neighbour was a short, rotund man, attired in a flowered dressing-gown. That was his usual dress ; he was very rarely seen in anything else, out of doors, unless on Sundays, when he changed it for a frock coat. He was popularly known as Bobby Curtis. He was great in the Vestry, and had a habit of laying down the law on any and every occasion, and it was supposed that he thought the flowered dressing-gown added to the dignity of his appearance. At any rate, unless in the Vestry, where he always wore a frock-coat, he never appeared without it.

Bobby Curtis had made his money as a

grocer, and retired from business at fifty-five, on less than three hundred a year, which he regarded as a genteel competency. He had been a widower some years, and all his children were married. He had nothing to interest him but politics, and he took the liveliest interest in them—parish politics especially. Yes, he liked to advise his neighbours a little, and he was advising Mr. John Thwaites now.

‘Here’s this nephew of yours that’s coming from the country—a likely lad, I dare say—if he takes to the business, you ought to give it up to him after a year or two. You’ve enough, and more than enough, to live upon; and you ought to give up, Mr. Thwaites, and make way for others. That’s what I did. Every one ought to have their turn; you’ve had yours, Mr. Thwaites, now let the young ones have theirs.’

‘It remains to be seen what the young

one can make of the business,' said Mr. Thwaites, doubtfully. 'I shouldn't like it to go to the dogs. I've worked it up, and worked it up, till I've made it what it is, and to see a young fellow, who doesn't know a nail from a hammer, make ducks and drakes of it, would be more than I should like. Besides, what should I do with my time?'

'You'd have the parish to see to,' said Bobby Curtis; and he stood on Mr. John Thwaites' hearthrug with his hands behind him, and his back to the fire, like a free-born Briton, as he was. 'You'd have the parish, and you'd be in the Vestry, and there's more like you wanted there, John Thwaites. The waste that's agoin' on, unless there's some one with a dozen eyes before and behind to prevent it! An' some of the Vestry are that soft-hearted, it's sickenin'. There's Mr. Dobson, a family man—a man who ought to know better,

an' have some notion o' the value of things—*he's* for givin' the old women tea of an afternoon, instead of porridge. Tea, for paupers! and the cheapest Congo is five shillin's a pound.'

'Tea's a great comfort to a woman,' said Mrs. John Thwaites, softly.

'Then the woman should keep out of the workhouse, ma'am,' said Bobby Curtis, 'if she wants her comforts. She can't expect the Guardians to allow them, nor the rate-payers to pay for 'em. Then there's the girls. We send 'em out to service as soon as they're old enough, and we can get places for 'em. They've been in the workhouse ever since they were babbies, and we've done the best we could for 'em, but more than half of 'em don't like work, and they won't keep their places; and then they've the brass to come back to us—saving your presence, Mrs. Thwaites—with *their* babbies, an' expect us to keep 'em

both ; an' we ain't agoin' to do it—we just sends them packin', babbies an' all. And yet there's one or two that soft-hearted—Dobson's one of them—who'd have us take the hussies in and give them another chance. Why, whatever the rates would come to if we did ! No, we've done our best for the girls, taught them to read their Bibles, and write their own names, and learn the catechism ; then we put them out to respectable service, and if they don't do well there, why they must take the consequences. *We* can't be saddled with 'em, nor let the ratepayers be saddled with 'em, neither.'

'Poor girls !' said Mrs. Thwaites.

'Well, I wonder at you, ma'am,' said Bobby Curtis ; 'a married lady, too. Now, if it had been anybody else, I should have said, "Where's your morals ?" but with you, Mrs. Thwaites——'

'Poor things !' again said Mrs. Thwaites ;

‘as like as not, none of ’em ever had any mother to teach ’em better.’

‘Mothers indeed !’ said Bobby Curtis, looking as red and as pompous as ever did turkey-cock ; ‘they’re better without ’em. Why, when they’ve had the parish for a mother, and the workhouse for a father, an’ been kept till fourteen or fifteen, or so, and then sent out into the world, why they ought to behave themselves in it. If they don’t, they must abide by the consequences. It’s false pity, ma’am, and sentiment, ma’am, that’s the ruin of parish work. We want practical men, ma’am ; practical men like your husband here—men with no nonsense about ’em—to manage a parish ; and men like myself, ma’am, who can put a thing plainly, and ain’t afraid to speak it out, for all the nonsense of all the Dobsons in the world.’

Bobby Curtis drew himself up, and made the most of his five-feet-two, and looked as

if he was prepared to annihilate any hostile vestryman. Mr. John Thwaites, whose oratorical powers were not so great as those of his friend, looked on admiringly ; and Mr. Curtis was about to proceed again, feeling the tide of his eloquence rising, when Dick and Guy were shown into the room.

Mr. Thwaites was just a little stiff in his reception of them. He wished to do his duty by his brother's son, but still he was afraid that he should find him a little too much of a gentleman.

Mrs. Thwaites looked very shyly at them. She knew that her husband's relations were above her, and she was not sure how Dick would behave.

Mr. Curtis was prepared to be affable, as became a vestryman of one of the largest London parishes, when Dick set aside all stiffness, and shyness, and condescension by

the manner in which he made himself welcome.

He shook hands so warmly with his uncle that he made his fingers tingle. Then he said, 'Is this my aunt?' and—receiving an affirmative, stooped down and kissed her, as she said afterwards, as if he had been a boy of her own. Then, without waiting to be introduced to Mr. Curtis, he shook hands with him too, said he was very glad to see him—very glad to see any friend of his uncle's; and then introduced Guy as his own friend and old schoolfellow, who had come up to London with him, to see if they couldn't make their fortunes together.

'I don't know about fortunes,' said Mr. Thwaites; 'but you may manage to make a decent living, if you don't mind what you turn your hand to. It won't do for people to be too genteel if they want to get on here.'

He eyed his nephew doubtfully as he spoke.

‘You won’t find my gentility stand in the way of anything you set me to do, uncle,’ said Dick. ‘I am ready for any sort of work that comes in my way.’

‘There’s a great deal of dirty work to be done in the building line,’ said Mr. Thwaites, looking at Dick’s well-kept hands and nails.

‘Never mind, as long as it’s honest work—and you won’t give me anything else, I know, uncle,’ said Dick. ‘What time shall I come to-morrow?’

‘Six o’clock, sharp. Can you turn out by that time?’ asked Mr. John Thwaites.

‘Five, if you like. Where shall I come?’ said Dick, cheerfully.

‘Here, and then I’ll take you on with me. Half an hour for breakfast.’

‘He’ll come back to breakfast with you, John,’ said Mrs. Thwaites, in her low, soft voice.

Mr. Thwaites looked doubtful.

‘*I can’t get from the shop and back in half an hour——*’

‘Just for a beginning,’ urged Mrs. Thwaites. ‘He’s not used to coffee-houses, nor the ways of the men, yet ; and we don’t want him to take his meals in public-houses, do we, John ?’

‘Well, just for to-morrow—just to breakfast,’ said Mr. Thwaites. ‘Then I shall see what you’re fit for, youngster, and tell you what we’d better get about.’

‘There’s a nice loin of pork for to-morrow’s dinner, John,’ said Mrs. Thwaites, ‘and country-folks mostly like pork. He might come and have a bit with us——’.

‘*I never do my dinner in an hour,*’ said Thwaites.

‘Oh, Mr. Richard is young, and won’t mind walking a little faster than you do, John,’ said Mrs. Thwaites ; ‘and he won’t want to take his glass of ale and his pipe afterwards ; and it will all be so strange for

him at first, and your own brother's son, you know.'

'Family feelings, ma'am, are very delightful things, but they can't be allowed to interfere with business,' said Bobby Curtis, who had been keeping silence much longer than he approved of; 'at the same time, I am glad to see that Mr. Thwaites is likely to have a nephew who will be of some use and comfort to him, and enable him, I hope, to give a little more time to parish matters than he has done hitherto. There's a fine field in our Vestry, sir, for an independent man, of a practical turn of mind. Nobody knows what a parish is till they've had to do with it, and how much men are wanted who've sound common sense to help manage it. It's like a little world, ma'am,' said Bobby Curtis, swelling with the subject, 'as your husband will find when he comes among us.'

There was a tray with bread and cheese

brought in, now, and Guy, Dick, and Bobby Curtis were all pressed to stay.

Mrs. John Thwaites was very friendly and hospitable to Guy; but she quite warmed to Dick. She promised to mend his stockings for him, and look after him generally.

‘And don’t be afraid of coming to me if you get into a little trouble,’ she said confidentially, ‘for you’re new to London, and young men will do foolish things; only they shouldn’t be so foolish as not to ask the advice of those who are older than themselves. And I’m not afraid, my dear boy,’ added the good woman, getting warmer and kinder as she spoke, ‘that you’ll ever do anything so bad you wouldn’t like to tell your mother, so you needn’t be afraid of coming to me.’

Dick kissed her again when they parted, and told his uncle he should be at the house before six the next morning.

Bobby Curtis gave them something very like a blessing, telling Guy he hoped to see him a Lord Mayor, in time, and Dick a blessing to his uncle, and a vestryman himself in twenty years or so.

Mr. Thwaites said very little, but reminded Dick that no one ever got on in business unless he was punctual.

And so they went home and slept soundly after their first day in London.

CHAPTER VII.

FATHER AND SON.

IT was the night before Mr. George Glynne's wedding, and he sat alone in the house to which, after a very short honeymoon, he was to bring home his bride, thinking, with a complacency that was almost ecstatic in its fulness, how very fortunate he had been, and how thoroughly he deserved his good fortune. His house was in Bedford Row, a street which I believe is now let out in offices to solicitors, but at that time it was occupied by private families of the highest respectability. George Glynne meant to

begin prudently. He was a very prudent young man indeed, so, although he was getting on very well in the world, and his wife was to bring him the snug fortune of ten thousand pounds, he had not ventured into Harley Street, where, at that time, retired nabobs so delighted to dwell, or into Russell Square, where the great magnates of the law and commerce had fixed their dwellings. He would wait for these. But Bedford Row suited him very well. It was near enough to the West End for his wife to keep on civil terms with his more aristocratic relations, and near enough to the City for him to walk to and from his counting-house, to the benefit of his health. Bedford Row was respectable—thoroughly respectable—and not too grand. He had taken two maids and a footman—a very fair establishment, at that time, for a young merchant, even if connected with aristocracy; and he had furnished the

house very well. Plenty of horsehair and mahogany in the dining-room, plenty of moreen and rosewood upstairs; one bedroom with a great fourpost bedstead and moreen curtains, and every other luxury for a sleeping-chamber, as sleeping-chambers went sixty years ago; two apartments, furnished as decently, and no more, as the manservant and two maids could require them; and a spare bedroom, in case his mother or any other guest should come, not at all too lavish in its plenishings. It was all complete now, and to-morrow was to see him married to the young lady whom he had been steadily courting for the last three years.

Did he love her? Do such people as George Glynne ever love at all? Can oysters feel? Can limpets throb with passion? Love is a madness, and idolatry an enthusiasm—we sink with it lower than the beasts; we rise with it higher

than the gods. Love—the youth of the soul ; the beautifier of the world ; the light of heaven thrown upon this arid earth—why, in the name of all that is commonplace and sensible, and respectable, and matter-of-fact—what should George Glynne want with it ? He did *not* want it. He knew nothing about it. He—this good, respectable, prudent young man—this embodiment of all the virtues that go to make up—say a millionaire living for his millions—what should he want with love ? and what could Miss Harriet Orr, his wife to-morrow, do with it if he offered it her ?

Theirs was a most suitable—a most sensible marriage. Everybody said so. The bride had a snug fortune, and fair expectations ; but nobody, not even herself, knew anything of her grandfather. The bridegroom came, on one side, of City people of high repute, though his grandfather had gone down in the deep sea of bankruptcy ;

but his grandfather's people had helped *him*, or perhaps he would not have been just as thriving and prosperous as he was now. By his grandmother and his mother's side he was connected with some good county families, and two or three earls and countesses ; and for all these advantages he took a certain modest credit to himself, so that he never felt troubled with much gratitude, either to his progenitors, or to any great First Cause, for having placed him where he was. Religious ? Well, I suppose George Glynne was as religious as most young men of his day, who did not belong to the Clapham sect, or go in for Wesleyanism. Scepticism, unless of the hardy, reckless, dare-devil kind, was not in fashion, then. Tom Paine and his school were low. So George Glynne went to church—the new St. Pancras, where his intended also worshipped ; and he was going to be married there to-morrow ; and had

taken a pew, and had it cushioned, and bought Prayer-books and Bibles, and all that was befitting, as became so respectable a young man, who meant to behave with all due propriety, both in this world and the next.

He was so comfortable to-night, and so satisfied that he had every right to be comfortable. All his gains—all his prosperity was nothing more than his deservings. What a bad affair his own father had made of his life! George Glynne always joined loudly at church in the responses to the Ten Commandments; and my readers of course know what the fifth is. So did George Glynne; still, knowing it, he could not repress a smug feeling of satisfaction at the thought that that unlucky, disreputable father of his was so comfortably provided for. Dead and buried. He took the latter as a matter of course. What a satisfaction that was! He had always

been such an unpleasant, unsatisfactory sort of relation, with a bloated face, and strange companions, and a habit of swearing and of borrowing money—all objectionable things, and very trying for a respectable young man to see in his own father.

‘He’d have borrowed of *me*,’ thought George Glynne, ‘and I should never have got my money back.’ Then he took another glass of wine. He had had a good dinner, considering he had sat down to it alone—it was the cook’s maiden effort in her new master’s behalf—and he had indulged himself with a bottle of wine out of his freshly-furnished cellar.

It was his last night as a bachelor. His freedom had been a very decorous one, still it *was* freedom. He had a dim sense of that now, with all his self-complacency, and he was not looking forward with the raptures of a lover to the morrow. He had enjoyed his dinner, and he made the most

of his good port, feeling that, when once a married man, his wife might think a whole bottle too much to be consumed at their dinner, or at any rate claim her share of it.

It was a wretched night. A little fog, and a dull, mizzling rain, compared to which a good steady downpour would have been lively and exhilarating. The oil-lamps made little way through the darkness ; the streets were quiet ; all who meant to go to the theatres had gone, and there was little to break the solemn stillness without, and the closed kitchen-door allowed no sound to be heard within. But George Glynne was very comfortable, with his fire, his four candles burning in their handsome Sheffield-plated candlesticks, and his good bottle of port wine before him. More comfortable, perhaps, than he would be at that time to-morrow, when he would have somebody else to think of besides himself.

Still it was right and proper that he should marry—a duty he owed to himself and to society—and Harriet Orr was a well-brought-up young woman, and had ten thousand pounds.

Suddenly there was a very loud knock at the door—a knock, George Glynne thought, that nobody ought to give unless he were the master of the house, and not even then, unless he was behind time for his dinner. The footman, who had already begun a flirtation with the youngest of the two maids, hurried upstairs, opened the street-door, closed it, and then, coming into the dining-room, informed his master that a gentleman wished to see him, but said it was not worth while to give his name.

‘It must be some of Harriet’s relations—her rich uncle from the country,’ thought George Glynne. He might have come to make his acquaintance before the wedding. He desired John to show the gentleman in,

and to put another glass on the table, and then he turned to look at the stranger, who was muffled in a large cloak wet with the rain, a handkerchief which concealed the lower part of his face, and a hat, which he did not remove till the footman had gone, pulled over his forehead. But the cloak was worn and shabby, the handkerchief had frayed edges, and though the beaver hat was well brushed and of a fashionable shape, that too had seen better days. Still there was that about his visitor which made George Glynne feel that the footman was hardly to blame in calling him a gentleman, although he did not look like a gentleman with whom things were prospering.

But, gentleman or not, he did not look at all likely to be Miss Harriet Orr's rich uncle.

When the footman had gone, the stranger came to the table and poured out a glass of

wine, drank it off, then helped himself to another. Mr. George Glynne involuntarily put his hand towards the bell-pull; his visitor's free-and-easy manners were rather disconcerting. The other raised his hand in deprecation.

'Don't ring, or you'll be sorry for it;' and the voice had a sound which woke unpleasant memories in the mind of George Glynne.

'I should like to know, sir, to whom I have the pleasure of addressing myself?' said George Glynne, stiffly.

'You shall know,' said the other, and again the voice and manner jarred upon the master of the house. 'This is very good wine of yours, but it wants keeping longer in bottle,' said his visitor, as he emptied his glass.

Then he took off his hat, removed the handkerchief from around his neck, and George Glynne sank back appalled at what

seemed to him to be a ghost risen from the grave.

‘Don’t look so scared, George—it’s myself in flesh and blood—ghosts don’t drink, do they?’ and Mr. Glynne, senior, took another glass of wine. ‘You’ll have to fetch up another bottle. I’ll leave the remains of this to you. But don’t have your man in the room. You don’t seem so pleased to see me as you might be. As to your mother—well, she does not seem to know what the feelings of a wife are—but I did expect more from you, George. Women are fools, and don’t make allowances. And, of all fools, a strait-laced one is the worst, and your mother’s that. But between father and son—men of the world, you know——’

George Glynne raised his hands in deprecation. His father’s world—that world of drink and dice, and foul, coarse sins—had always been so different to his own. And

what was he to do with this hardened sinner, this wreck without decency or respectability, that called itself his father? Did he expect to go to the wedding, and be introduced to Harriet's relations? And what would they say—what would they think of this sudden revival? His paternal relatives had come forward and helped him when his father had died—or disappeared, as it proved to be, now—because, they said, they *could* do it, as Mr. Frederick Glynne was no longer living to be an incubus and disgrace to them. What would they think now? Why, perhaps, that he had known, all this time, his very disreputable parent was living. How could he face it all? What should he do? What would be thought of him? Why, his very marriage might be broken off, and he should lose Harriet and her money, and have this house, of which he had taken a long lease, and all the furniture and servants, on his

hands, and not know what to do with them !

He felt, and looked, so dreadfully puzzled and so hopelessly wretched, that Mr. Glynne took offence.

‘ A pretty welcome for a father,’ he said.
‘ You and your mother are a nice pair !’

‘ I—I—am surprised, sir,’ gasped George—he felt as if he must say something ;
‘ this is so unexpected, you know—I—I—really am not prepared. And—and—then, you see, just now I have been taken up with other things——’

‘ Yes, I know ; you are going to be married to-morrow. I have seen the girl ; she is no beauty, but will do well enough for a wife. And she has money, and comes of well-to-do people. You always knew how to take care of yourself, George, always ; very well, now you must take care of me—“ Honour thy father ”—tenth commandment, isn’t it ? I don’t know ; it’s a

long while since I learnt my catechism, but I know your mother drove it well into your head when you were a youngster. Well, I've come back to be honoured—here I am, George—do your duty by me.'

Mr. Glynne flung himself back in the armchair of which he had taken possession, stretched out his feet—and, in all his misery, George Glynne noticed that the soles of his boots were almost worn through, and the uppers patched. What a pair of boots for his father to wear! He looked perfectly at home. Had he come to live with him? thought his son—Impossible! Neither Harriet nor he could tolerate such an inmate. No decent servant would remain with them. The scandals, the disgraceful scenes that had been enacted in his father's house should never be repeated in his.

'I—I—am quite willing, sir,' he said presently, 'to do my duty, as you express it, by you. I am very far from a rich man.'

‘Not a very poor one, however,’ said Mr. Glynne, glancing round the handsomely-furnished room, and finishing the last glass of wine in the bottle, oblivious of the fact that he had left it for his son.

‘For the credit of the firm to which I belong, it is essential that I should keep up appearances,’ said George, sententiously, ‘but I shall have to economise to do so. Still, I wish to do what is correct, sir. I hope I shall always do my duty in every relation of life, and I suppose a moderate allowance—I could afford a hundred a year——’

‘Pooh!’ said Mr. Glynne. ‘That’s starvation.’

‘Not at all, sir, if properly managed. Thorpe Leigh is a cheap place.’

‘And what the devil should I do at Thorpe Leigh?’ asked Mr. Glynne, fiercely.

‘Go back and live with my mother, sir,’

said the correct young man, with virtuous austerity. 'With her income and that additional hundred you ought to be very comfortable.'

'I've seen your mother, and she won't let me come near her; and, besides, I abominate Thorpe Leigh.'

'Then go to the Continent, sir. That is open now, and there are plenty of places, I am told, where persons of moderate means and genteel habits may live inexpensively. And, of course, my mother ought to live with you—it is her duty——'

'You won't get her to do it, then,' said Mr. Glynne. 'I've seen her.'

'And what did she say?' asked George, severely. He thought it an unheard-of thing that his mother, having married the wretch before him, should refuse to endure the perpetual pollution of his presence. A wife ought to live with her husband. He might have his faults—his father certainly

had his—he might be impure, a drunkard, vile and loathsome, a man whose very touch would be contamination, but, not the less, his home was with the woman to whom he had given his name, and the satisfaction of performing her duty ought to be sufficient reward for her.

Mr. George Glynne meant to do his duty—why couldn't his mother do hers?

Mr. Glynne not answering his son at once, the latter repeated, with virtuous surprise :

‘And what did my mother say when you told her of your desire to reside again with her?’

‘Told me she'd give me up to the hangman if I didn't take myself off,’ said his father, sullenly.

‘And—and—what did she mean by that?’ gasped George Glynne, with a little alarmed surprise.

‘She meant what she said. And, if I hadn't gone at once, she would have kept


her word. My dear boy, you don't know your mother. No one ever does know of what a woman is capable, when her temper's up, but her husband.'

'But—but—what did she mean by such a threat? You—you haven't——' stammered out George Glynne, afraid to put his meaning into words.

'I haven't committed a murder, George, if that's what you want to know,' said Mr. Glynne. 'But the law puts its fingers round a man's neck for things far short of that. I suppose you've heard of Fauntleroy?' he added carelessly.

'Oh, good Lord! You don't mean to say that you—you——'

George Glynne felt as if the whole world was toppling round him. That he, the most respectable, the most correct of men, should have for his father one who might feel the hangman's noose! He could never get over it—he could never hold up his head



again, or look his fellows in the face ! What an awful—what a dreadful thing it was for such a good young man as himself to have such a being as this belonging to him ! And his father did not seem to mind it at all, himself. He seemed perfectly callous—hardened—not a bit of shame left in him !

‘ It would be an unpleasant thing for you, George, if I should be hanged,’ said Mr. Glynne presently, in as unmoved a tone as if he were talking of the most ordinary event in the world. ‘ And Miss Orr’s family would not like it. And then, those other City men you are acquainted with—what would they say ?’

‘ It’s all nonsense ! You have planned it to frighten me,’ said George Glynne, suddenly. ‘ You don’t mean to say that if you were likely to be—be—be——’

‘ Hanged, George,’ said Mr. Glynne, mildly.

‘Yes—if you will have it—you wouldn’t sit there as if nothing was amiss, and make a joke of it.’

‘By ——! I am not making a joke!’ said Mr. Glynne, fiercely. ‘Write to your mother, or go and see her, if you think better of it. Take your wife down there for your honeymoon, if you like ; and, when you are there, call on one Mr. Reuben Deane, and ask him if he hasn’t some bills of mine, with his name on them, which, if he could lay hands on me, would be enough to ensure conviction—or, stay—I have a letter from your mother, her last *billet doux*—we don’t correspond often—see what she says.’

George Glynne recognised his mother’s handwriting, at once, on the sheet of paper Mr. Glynne handed to him, and he read :

“I can do nothing for you—I can send you nothing. Out of my slender means, what have I to spare for you to waste on

drink, or at the gambling-table, or in worse ways still ? You threaten me with another visit. Come at your peril. I have told Mr. Deane everything, and, sooner than endure what I have endured for years, sooner than live, even for a day, under the same roof with you, I will ask him to interfere. If I have then the shame of being the widow of a convicted felon, I shall at least have the freedom.”’

‘That’s a nice letter, isn’t it, for a woman to send her husband ? I wanted to go back—I felt my health wanted change and rest. I thought I could not well return to Thorpe Leigh ; I suggested that there were even cheaper places in England where we might go, and asked for a little help while she was making the necessary arrangements, and you see the answer I get.’

‘My mother does not consider *me* at all,’ said George.

‘Of course she doesn’t. Well, if she will

not have me back, I must come to you. I am sick of leading a dog's life. I'll die like a dog sooner ; and, if you cannot, or will not, provide for me, George, I'll go to the first police-station and give myself up.'

'But you—you know what will happen then !'

'It will soon be over,' said the other, with a shrug of his shoulders. 'I can't go on like this. If I could get those cursed papers that I was fool enough to put another man's name to, I should do well enough. I did think at one time that might have been managed—but luck's always against me.'

George Glynne felt that his father was in earnest. He was reckless, desperate ; and besides, George knew of old that he could be fearfully vindictive when he pleased. He might, sheerly to punish and degrade his son, do as he had said. He was capable of it.

At any rate, he must be kept quiet till the marriage was over. He would give him something for the present, and see if some arrangements could not be made with his mother. She ought to take her husband abroad, and look after him. It was her positive duty. How very ill he looked ! Not fit to be by himself. If she had him at some quiet little place in France, she could take proper care of him, and keep him from coming to England and soiling his son's respectability. As to that letter ! It was enough to frighten a man from ever marrying at all to think that, under any circumstances, a wife could write such a one.

‘I will give you ten pounds,’ he said presently, ‘and I will write to my mother to-night, and see if nothing can be done. I certainly think you ought to be with her—not at Thorpe Leigh, of course, but in some little place abroad, where she could look

after you, and make the most of such an allowance as I can spare.'

Mr. Glynne shook his head.

'You can't get her to do that; she's as obstinate as the devil.'

'I shall speak plainly,' said George; 'I shall tell her I am prepared to do my duty, and that she ought to do hers.'

'Give me twenty pounds—that's your duty for the present,' said his father; 'that will last me till you're back from the honeymoon. Then I'll meet you—I won't come here. If I write to the City, your wife won't read the letter, and we'll settle what's to be done for the future.'

'Twenty pounds!'

'Well, I shan't trouble you for a month, and I owe my landlady, and I'm in debt elsewhere; besides, there's two of us.'

'Two!' cried George Glynne, in virtuous horror.

'Don't look scandalised, my dear boy;

the other is Jem O'Brien, and he's seriously ill.'

'You've kept him all these years?'

'He's kept himself. Somehow, we've hung on together. But give me the twenty. If you don't, by G—! there shall be no wedding to-morrow!'

George Glynne quailed before the devil in his father's eyes, and gave up the money. Then Mr. Glynne went his way, and George sat down and wrote his mother a letter, which made her feel, as mothers sometimes do, a great wonder at the meanness of the creature to whom she had given birth.

Ah! happy those women who have *but* their dead to mourn; who have only their children's graves over which to sorrow.

CHAPTER VIII.

MISS WATTS.

Two days after Dick's first visit to his uncle, it occurred to Guy to arrange and look over his papers and letters in the great old-fashioned mahogany desk that had been his father's. Then he came across the receipt which Reuben Deane had given him. He had flung it into the desk, folded up as it was, without looking at it. When he opened the paper he could scarcely believe his eyes.

'Look at this, Dick,' he said at last. 'What does it mean? I only gave the old

man fifty pounds, and this is a receipt in full. Can he have made a mistake ?

‘ Reuben Deane is the last man living to make a mistake in money matters,’ said Dick. ‘ But, if you’ve any doubt, write and ask him. My belief is, he did it on purpose.’

‘ But why should he ?’ asked Guy.

‘ He’s an odd fellow, and there’s no accounting for tastes. Besides, you saved him once from being thrown into the Old Gravel Pit, and once from being knocked on the head. I take it, that’s his way of repaying the obligation.’

‘ There’s no obligation at all !’ cried Guy. ‘ I catch hold of the rein of a horse, and the collar of a thief ! What is there in that, that he should give me a thousand pounds for doing it ? I’ll write, and send his receipt back to the old fellow.’

So he did, and Reuben Deane returned it.

‘You might have saved yourself postage,’ he wrote back, very curtly, ‘and have kept the receipt I gave you. My life and limbs are worth more to me than the balance of the debts your father owed. Nor are you legally bound to pay them; at the same time, it is right that you should try to do so. They *are* paid now. I have had full value for my money. The next thing for you to do, if you are man enough to do it—and I think you are—is to buy back the lands the Thurstones have held for generations. They have had them as long as the Chalcombes have had theirs, and have always done well by those who worked for them. I can’t say as much for the squires as for the yeomen. There’s a task for you, Guy Thurstone. Try and do it.’

‘Will they be in the market when I have the money to buy them?’ asked Guy, doubtfully, of Dick.

‘I think it’s likely they will, and the Chalcombe lands too. Don’t you know who bought your father’s property? Squire Chalcombe, your loving uncle. He borrowed the money of old Deane. I know all about it, because Quail and Flint managed the business for him. And they do say his own affairs are in a pretty mess, and that he will never be able to pay Deane off, after all. So that you’ll only have the old fellow to settle with. It’s worth trying for, Guy.’

So it was. To buy back those lands ; to have his home in his own county. To let there be Thurstones again, as there had been for years. No ducal house could have had more pride of race, more sturdy independence, than had had these yeomen dwelling among their own people, under their lowly roof-tree, for so many generations. Never a breath against them till Richard Thurstone had died, overborne by his troubles.

Honest and kind, fair-dealing and true. The blood was as sweet and pure, the race as loyal as any in the kingdom. Surely it was a name worth keeping up. Surely it was a heritage worth trying to win back from the Chalcombes, who had despised the father and disowned the son.

‘I’ll think it over,’ said Guy, ‘and I’ll write and thank Reuben Deane.’

‘I would,’ said Dick. ‘I dare say, when he sees you, he’ll tell you that you’re very wasteful in postage, and that thanks are not coin he cares to be troubled with. Still, I’d send the thanks just the same; he’ll be pleased with them.’

Guy and Dick lived a very quiet, and what many young men would think a monotonous, life in their two small rooms. They both worked hard, each in his way.

Dick gave his uncle great satisfaction. He said to his wife, there was no nonsense

about him, and that he should never have thought he was the son of such a fool as his mother.

His aunt had taken to him from the first, and Bobby Curtis lost no opportunity of impressing upon Mr. John Thwaites how very easy it would be for him to devote himself, now, to the duties of a vestryman.

Guy made some progress in the City, and was looking forward to better things.

They had their recreations : country walks were possible, and now and then they saw the Kembles and Mrs. Siddons, or walked over to see Grimaldi at Sadler's Wells. It was a quiet, self-denying life, pure, honest, and healthy.

Guy had his object in view, which he kept steadily before him ; and Dick had his—to find out Mary Ann's lover, and bring about matters happily between them.

He had called on Miss Watts, and taken Guy with him. She lived in a quiet street in Camden Town—then a very rural neighbourhood—a thriving village, indeed, separated from London by fields and nursery gardens.

The old lady received them very kindly, and asked them to tea.

Dick, who always considered that he was indebted to his legal training for a certain finesse and power of beating about the bush, as he expressed it, led the conversation to the time when Miss Mary Ann had been staying with her aunt, and the pleasant people she had talked of meeting at her aunt's house. He thought this must lead Miss Watts to talk about them, and that he might learn something in this way.

The plan seemed to answer. Miss Watts talked of various people, but especially of a gentleman, Samuel Brown, who had seen a good deal of Mary Ann while in

town, and been charmed with her. He had also taken the ladies to the play, and had beau'd Mary Ann to the Tower one day, when Miss Watts had not been well enough to accompany her.

Dick thought it was not very prudent of Miss Watts to let her young niece go about town with a comparative stranger, and there was no doubt that Mr. Samuel Brown had made good use of his time in the Tower to make an impression on Mary Ann's tender heart.

'There's no fear but he's the fellow,' he said to Guy. 'Now if I can only get to see him, I'll soon find out what's amiss ; whether it's money, or his relations, or maybe, they've had a tiff. When people are in love they do fall out for such absurd things, and if there's nobody to set them straight, why they may go on being wretched to the end of their days. These two shan't, if I can help it. If it's money,

I've got some of my own, now, to help them with. Of course I must look to my mother now, even before Mary Ann ; but I'll speak to Miss Watts. She has a nice little income, and I daresay she lays by out of it. Now, why shouldn't she help them ? Mary Ann meets Mr. Samuel Brown under her roof ; she let's the poor girl go out with the young fellow, which I don't think it was at all the right thing for Miss Watts to do, and of course she's responsible ; she *ought* to do something ; it's her duty. If it's the relations on his side, I shall have to see how that's to be managed. I shall let them know that Mary Ann's people are not to be sneezed at, if her mother does keep a school. Oh ! let me only find the right man, and I'll set things straight, never fear.'

'What a deal of trouble you are taking, Dick, to marry the girl you love to somebody else,' said Guy.

‘ Well, if I can’t make her happy in my way, I must in her own,’ said Dick.

‘ If I cared for a girl, I don’t think it would be just in your fashion, Dick,’ observed his friend. ‘ But then, I doubt very much whether, in that way, I shall ever care for a girl at all.’

But as he spoke, the image of a young, saintlike face, with earnest eyes, came before him. Would he not, could he not, do as much for its owner as ever Dick was doing for Mary Ann Smith? And yet to win her for his own had never yet occurred to him. She was half-saint, half-child, set apart from other girls by her weakness and infirmities. Till this moment he had never thought that she might yet be loved as other women are—but even then she would not be for him. Old Deane would want a rich husband for her ; and, for himself, had he not the Thurstone lands to buy back, and his father’s name to build up again ?

The next day, by an odd coincidence—one of those coincidences that so often happen in real life, and that we poor story-tellers hardly dare make use of—Dick and he had a formal little note, nicely written on gilt-edged paper, in which Miss Watts hoped for the pleasure of their company to dinner on the following Sunday, to meet her esteemed friend Mr. Samuel Brown.

Miss Watts was prim, precise, but the very soul of good-nature. She liked to have a knife and fork, as she expressed it, for young men, at her Sunday dinner, at one o'clock. After dinner they could stroll in her garden, or walk through the fields towards Holloway or Highgate. Then, after tea, she always expected them to go to church with her, and one would carry her prayer-book, another her parasol. Miss Watts kept young men to their good behaviour. I wish we had more

Miss Wattses among us now. Then she brought them home to a simple little supper, and then sent them away in good time, feeling none the worse for this quiet day with a kind-hearted Christian gentlewoman, though she would not have dreamed of allowing them, any more than they would have dreamed of attempting, either to smoke or to utter slang in her presence.

Three gentlemen was a large number for Miss Watts to entertain, but she could not ask Dick without Guy, and she wished Mr. Samuel Brown—who was, so she considered, a man of the world, and likely to be of service to them if, in their country inexperience, they wanted advice—to know them both.

Dick was fluttered, but delighted, by the invitation.

‘Now I shall get to know him,’ he said, ‘and the rest will be easy.’

He spent an hour in dressing on Sunday morning ; he wished to make an impression on Mary Ann's lover ; in fact, to look like a man of the world, and a person of consequence ; one, indeed, whom a young lady need not be ashamed of knowing. They were early at Miss Watts's, and Mr. Brown was late. Dick's heart throbbed when he heard his knock at the door, and he turned nervously when Miss Watts introduced him formally to ' my friend, whom I wish you to know for your sakes, as well as his own,' and saw a little rosy man, with a decided squint, fifty-five at least, and heard him tell Miss Watts that he had good accounts from his wife, and that it was clear the six months she had been spending in Devonshire with her friends had done her even more good than they had dared to hope for.

So this couldn't be Mary Ann's lover, after all. Dick felt quite disheartened.

How should he help the poor girl, and save her from breaking her heart ? He felt as if his own was breaking, through sympathy with hers.

CHAPTER IX.

CONCERNING PARSONS.

THERE was a break in the quiet lives of Guy and Dick when they had been six months in London, and this was caused by the arrival of the Reverend Hugh Penroyd. He came to spend a month in London, he told them, and had lost no time in bringing Guy a long letter and a large parcel from Mrs. Glynne, of which he was the bearer.

Our young fellows were very glad to see their parson. They had both known him since they were boys ; they had said their Catechism to, and been prepared for confirmation by, him. I dare say a great many

of the rising Evangelical School would have said that such preparation was not worth much, and talked of the Reverend Hugh Penroyd as a blind leader of the blind; and, indeed, the religious world might have been none the worse if the Reverend Hugh Penroyd had been the elder brother instead of the second, and so have become a squire instead of a parson. But as it was, there are more misplaced men than the Vicar of Thorpe Leigh. And he had had a tolerably useful and a very happy life, till one small trouble had crept into it, of which I shall speak presently.

He could not have soared into the heights of spiritual life, he could not have grappled with the depths of sin; but for his people, who were not devotees or saints, but content to go to heaven at the jog-trot pace their fathers had done before them, he did well enough. Those plain, practical sermons of his met the case of people who

were guilty of no great sins, and who never troubled themselves with doubts and queries. Those were matter-of-fact times ; when people died they liked to be buried near their family—father, mother, and as many of the children as could be, all together in a snug corner of the churchyard ; they said it would be so nice, at the sound of the Archangel's trumpet on the last day, all to rise at once, without the trouble of looking about for each other. The mystery of matter was no mystery to them—they never troubled themselves about it. They had such a comfortable, pleasant way of quietly ignoring everything they did not want to enter into. They believed immensely, or they thought they did ; and the age of miracles was not past, and everything was possible to Providence. How comfortable it all was ! Of course there was the doctrine of everlasting fire, but, unless in the Athanasian Creed (now

going out of fashion), Church-people never were too fond of damning their neighbours—and there was a pleasant old-fashioned saying I have heard in my childhood :

‘Betwixt the saddle and the ground,
Mercy may be sought and found.’

They had a great faith in death-bed repentance. Even a squire had been known to think that a poacher might see the error of his ways at last; and as nobody could be sure but that the worst man might find time for repentance, why there was not much fear that Satan’s kingdom would be overpeopled. Popes and Jesuits, of course, went there—there was still a morbid fear of Rome ; but individual Catholics were looked upon as poor benighted creatures, whom it would be too hard to punish everlastingly for a mistake in doctrine.

I think the parsons must have had a pleasant time of it in the early part of this

century. I often feel very sorry for them now. They were so secure, so safe, sixty or seventy years ago. Wesley had done his work, and in the upheaval of his soul had stirred a world ; but, though Methodism remained, it went on its way quietly, saving souls the Church had never thought of caring for, working in quiet and secluded places, and, if it came into towns and villages, content to be unobtrusive and unobserved. Scepticism was not fashionable—the Liberation Society had not been heard of, disestablishment was undreamed of—the Church was considered as secure as the throne. And when a gentleman put his son in the Church, the young man had not the further trouble of deciding to which of the many sects into which the Church is now divided he would belong. He knew what was expected of him in the pulpit, and the people knew what they were likely to meet with in the church.

So Mr. Penroyd had had a pleasant life, and one that suited him ; but of late, with advancing years, there had come a feeling of loneliness—a sense that the Vicarage wanted something to complete it—and then it had occurred to him that this might be well supplied by Mrs. Glynne. He had had this feeling now for half-a-dozen years, during which time he had endeavoured to make way with his neighbour, but it was a feeling that it seemed impossible to induce Mrs. Glynne to share. She was kindness and neighbourliness itself, but the moment Mr. Penroyd attempted to induce her to look on him as something more than a friend, he found himself almost petrified,—he made no way at all.

At last he took a desperate step and wrote. It was possible that she did not understand him, or might think that he ought to express himself more clearly. He would make the venture. He did, and it

proved an unlucky one. Mrs. Glynne wrote back :

‘MY DEAR FRIEND,

‘Let me look upon you as a friend, still, and as nothing more. It is impossible that it should be otherwise. Please never to mention the subject on which you have touched, again.’

There was no hope for him. Evidently she would never change her mind, and was almost angry with him. So he should be lonely all his life, for he could not transfer his likings from one lady to another so easily. He was hurt, and out of sorts.

Of course, at his age, he was not going to die of a broken heart, so he would come up to town for a little amusement and change ; he would hunt up his old friends ; he would buy himself a few books ; he would go to the play ; he would

look at the new buildings and the new streets which had been added to London ; and then he would go back to his people and his church, and be as good a friend and neighbour to Mrs. Glynné as ever.

He got a friend to take his Sunday duties for him ; and he left him a pile of sermons, in case he brought none of his own.

Parson Penroyd went through his sermons every three years, and then began afresh. If anything very striking happened, he wrote a new one ; otherwise, he altered and did the old ones up for minor occasions. His people were not critical, and their memories were not very vivid ; so that the Parson's powers of composition were not greatly taxed.

Those were not the days when parsons preached discourses on the subjects of the day, to show how well up they were in their

Saturday Review, their *World*, and the last sweet thing in Infidelity. And though Parson Penroyd was a justice of the peace, and very much liked by his people, still he did not think it incumbent on him to be for ever looking after them, as if they were so many bad little boys, who could not take care of themselves.

Our poor parsons (once more, how I do pity them !) have so many bugbears nowadays ! There is the bugbear of Ritualism, and the bugbear of Dissent, and the bugbear of Darwinism, and the bugbear of Disestablishment. I rather think that is the latest scare, and the Liberation Society seems the freshest young ogre of the day.

Nothing of all this troubled our Parson Penroyd. He was at peace with his bishop and his people ; he was not afraid of the Dissenters ; he had no Penny Readings on his mind, at which, if a Nonconformist were to

take the chair, the parish would come to an end ; he did not call his people heathens, after the fashion of another son of the Church, when speaking of the ruder portion of his flock ; but he treated them like Christians and rational beings ; and, somehow, the greater portion of them behaved pretty well, as if they deserved such treatment.

Ah, peace to Parson Penroyd and his like ! There may be better men amongst the rising lights of the day, but there may be worse. He was an honest, if not an eloquent, preacher, and as true and kindly a gentleman as any in all England.

The Parson took our young men to the play twice, and each time brought them home with him to supper. And after supper he gave them good counsel, mixed with many reminiscences of his own early days.

He told them to be good lads, and to work

hard, and to lead such lives that they might never feel unfit to take a good woman by the hand, or to look her in the face.

‘That’s the test,’ said the Parson; and no knight of old could have believed in what he said more thoroughly, or said it more chivalrously. ‘There can’t be anything very wrong about a fellow if he feels that, though he can’t get the woman he likes to love him, he has done nothing to make him unworthy of her love.’

Then he told them to write to him in any trouble or difficulty, and he would do his best to advise and help them—just as if they were sons of his own, for a man without sons had all the more cause to help young fellows without fathers.

Parson Penroyd was due at dinner to Mr. George Glynne the day before he left London. Parson Penroyd was not a mere country parson, for he had a cousin who was a lord, and his elder brother was a

squire with a good estate. So Mr. George Glynne, who might, with advantage, have read Thackeray's 'Book of Snobs'—only it was not at that time written—delighted to do him honour.

He asked his wife's family to meet him, and both his other partners. There was the regulation dinner of the time—gravy soup, cod's head and shoulders, boiled fowls and ham, saddle of mutton, massive sweets and solid *entrées*. But the dinner did Mrs. George Glynne credit as a housekeeper, and the port was excellent. There was whist afterwards, and the Parson played a very good rubber; he generally won, and it was a very good thing for the old women of his parish that he did, for their tea and sugar came out of his winnings.

The party broke up early; the gentlemen were all men of business who had to be at their counting-houses in good time on the morrow; and Parson Penroyd, who had a

long day's journey in prospect, was going too, when his host gently detained him.

'If quite convenient, my dear sir,' he said, 'I should be glad to have a little quiet talk with you before you go.'

The honest heart of Parson Penroyd fluttered as it had not done for years, at these words. The gentleman who spoke them was the son of the woman whom Parson Penroyd most admired and loved. He did not admire the son at all, thinking him rather too good and too respectable a young man. Parson Penroyd had no faith in ultra-goodness. But what could Mr. George Glynne have to say to him? Could, *could* his mother have relented, and desired George to intimate her relentings? No! that was not possible—he was a fool to think it. Mrs. Glynne, if she had seen fit to change her mind, would have written a straightforward letter to him, saying as much. She would know that there would

be no need for her to beat about the bush, or get any one else to do it on her behalf.

Mrs. George Glynne, who had shaken hands with the last of her guests, looked at her husband inquiringly.

‘Mr. Penroyd is an old friend of mine, my dear, and of my mother’s, and I should like a little quiet talk with him before he goes.’

Mrs. George saw that she was not to join in the talk, so she obediently went her way, after wishing Mr. Penroyd good-night. Her husband opened the door for her politely, and closed it carefully; then he went up to the fireplace by which Parson Penroyd stood in a state of expectant wonder.

‘Please sit down, Mr. Penroyd,’ he said. ‘I want to consult you upon rather a delicate matter, if you will be so good as to give me your attention.’

Parson Penroyd bowed his acquiescence. His people very often came to him for

advice, rather more often perhaps about their affairs in this world than in the next; and, though he had a hearty English horror of the confessional, he was always ready to give what counsel he could, and, being a gentleman, secrecy was a matter of course. But what could this clever, nice, well-spoken young man, with his good house and his good-looking, commonplace young wife, have to consult him about? He was so prematurely old and sensible, that Parson Penroyd felt it would better have beseemed him to take counsel of George Glynne than for George Glynne to have sought it of him.

‘You—you are a friend of my mother’s, sir?’ said Mr. George.

‘I hope I have that honour, Mr. Glynne,’ said the Parson.

‘And I think, in most things, she would be guided by your judgment. Well, she and I are at variance on a certain matter. •

I cannot get her to look at it in what I think is the right light—for it is a duty, a clear and positive duty, about which we differ—and my mother, I regret to say, is not acting in this case with the consideration that a regard for the welfare of others—and—and—of my interests—and the consideration that is due to me should induce her to do.'

'Mrs. Glynne must be a better judge in such cases than I can possibly be,' said Mr. Penroyd, stiffly.

'You don't know all—you don't know all,' said George Glynne, nervously. Then he opened the drawing-room door to make sure that no one was listening, and then came back. 'Of course, Mr. Penroyd, what I say is in the strictest confidence.'

'Perfectly so—perfectly so,' said the Parson, more and more puzzled.

'Well, it—it—relates to my unhappy father. He was not—he has not—he is

not—' said George Glynne, confusing his tenses as he remembered he was speaking of a living reprobate, instead of a dead one—' not quite what a parent should be ; but it is not for a son to speak harshly of a father's faults, is it, Mr. Penroyd ? and a wife certainly ought to make some allowance for a husband's shortcomings.'

' I am not aware that Mrs. Glynne ever failed in this respect, and her forbearance was certainly severely tried,' said the Parson, with increasing stiffness.

' Well—well—my father had—has—his faults. He is not perfect, sir ; like the rest of us. But I think—with judicious management and that discretion that it is a wife's duty to exercise, he might be brought to see the error of his ways ; for my father is living, sir—of course you have promised secrecy—there are reasons why the fact should not be known ; I need not enter into these. Now, he wishes to

return to my mother, and were he living——'

'I understand, sir. The law, in the shape of his creditors, would get hold of him, and he would end his days in the Fleet. I suppose that's what you mean to say,' said the Parson, testily.

The news of Mr. Glynne's survival had come like a thunderbolt upon him, but, like a thunderbolt, it had cleared the air. This, then, was the reason Mrs. Glynne had refused him. He felt a prouder man, and withal a happier, for the little blow his self-esteem had received was cured by this intelligence. She might have been his if she had been free. Nay, she would, he felt sure of that, and drew himself up at the thought.

'Well, sir, we'll put it that way, if you like,' said Mr. George Glynne. 'At any rate, his existence must be kept a secret. Now my father is a careless man, an extra-

vagant man in money matters, and his claims on me are heavy. If he were with my mother on the Continent, I would make an allowance, and she could take care of him—his health, I think, is failing’—if ever wish was father to the thought, it was in this case—‘and he wants the attention of a wife.’

‘And Mrs. Glynne won’t give it to him?’ asked the Parson, abruptly.

‘I am sorry to say she *will not*. Has positively refused, though I have urged her repeatedly to do so. She is pitiless—it is dreadful—it is cruel—and—and—it’s not respectable. While my father is alive her place is with him; and I thought, my dear sir, if you, whose opinion I know she values so much, would but impress this on her, she might be brought to see her duty to my father—and—and his family.’

‘I’ll be hanged if I’ll say a word to her about it,’ said the Parson. ‘Why, sir, you

know what your father was. A man of a foul, unclean life, not fit to breathe the same air as a good woman. He may be repentant, but, if so, he can repent alone. Besides, he has you to look after him; and something as near a sneer as Mr. Penroyd's honest features could convey, sat on them.

‘But I have my wife—and—my business; and my mother’s place is with her husband, let him have been what he might;’ and, with a fine candour, Mr. George Glynne added: ‘I do not say he has been faultless, but we all have our faults—we are none of us perfect; and it is a wife’s place to show mercy to the errors of her husband. Who should if she does not?’

‘Mrs. Glynne has shown mercy enough in her time,’ said the Parson; ‘and to expect her to take back a foul-tongued, foul-living man, an utter outcast—oh, I know him, sir—I know him, almost as well as his wife does—why, it is a scandal and disgrace

even to think of it. There are limits, sir—there are limits to everything.’

‘Surely not to the pity and compassion of a wife to a penitent sinner,’ said George Glynne, sanctimoniously.

‘Is he penitent? That is the question. Do you really mean to tell me, Mr. George Glynne, that your father has seen the error of his ways, and is ready to repent in sackcloth and ashes, as it were, for his many sins against God and man, and especially against that much-injured lady, his wife?’

‘Well, really, sir, I cannot say—you—you expect too much. My father, I really believe, would like to lead a more decorous life than he has hitherto done, but being weak, and prone to yield to temptation, and not a good manager of his slender resources, it would be a good thing every way if my mother could be brought to do her part and help him. If he has an out-

break, sir, it would be a shocking thing for the family credit, and for mine. But my mother cannot be brought to see what she owes to me.'

'Suppose you think of what you owe to her? Wouldn't that be better, sir? Let her have a little peace at last, and keep that reprobate, your father, from troubling her. That's my advice. Send your father, by all means, out of England, if he'll go, at your own cost and charges; and go and look after him now and then, if you think he will be the better for it. But let your mother rest. She has done her part, now do you do yours. Think of your own duty, Mr. George Glynne, before you attempt to lay down rules for your mother.'

Then Parson Penroyd put on his hat, and went out of the house, feeling glad that he had spoken his mind, and glad, too, in spite of the possible trouble that

Mr. Glynne might bring to his wife, or the unpleasantness he might cause to that good young man, his son, that there had been a real, tangible reason for Mrs. Glynne's refusal to share his Vicarage with him. 'It might have been'—he had always that thought now—it *might* have been, if Mrs. Glynne had been indeed a widow. He felt that that thought would be a stay and consolation in his lonely bachelorhood. And if he couldn't marry Mrs. Glynne, she should find him a better friend and neighbour than ever.

CHAPTER X.

THE HOUSE BY THE RIVER.

BUT when Parson Penroyd returned home, a great disappointment met him. He found not only that Reuben Deane had left the town, taking with him Eunice and Mary Ann Smith, but that Mrs. Glynne had accompanied the party. Mrs. Thwaites, having let her own house furnished to some North-country people, for one of whom the sweet, soft air of that part of the world had been prescribed, was taking care of Mrs. Glynne for her; but she did not know at all when that lady would return. Mr. Deane had decided on taking his great-niece up

to London, to see what the doctors there could do for her. She was much better, and he thought they might work a cure. Mary Ann Smith had gone as companion and governess, and Mrs. Glynne was to see that the doctor's directions were fully carried out. It was a very fine thing for Mary Ann Smith. She would see something more of the London sights, and perhaps pick up a husband; but she wondered at Mrs. Glynne going, and leaving her home, to live with Reuben Deane. A workhouse boy he had been, and nobody knew anything more of him. She, Mrs. Thwaites, would not have minded going, but then she had come down in the world, and her father had only been a curate, whereas Mrs. Glynne's was a vicar. She could have looked after the poor young lady (she supposed Eunice Clare would expect to be called a young lady now) just as well as Mrs. Glynne. And had

Mr. Penroyd, while in London, seen anything of Lawyer Snark? If it had not been for him, she, Mrs. Thwaites, might be living in her own house, instead of letting it furnished, and looking after other people's. Then Mrs. Thwaites cried a little, and would have gone on maundering for another hour; but the Parson, who was in no mood to play the part of consoler, hurried away to think over his own troubles, and lament the absence of Mrs. Glynne.

It was, indeed, true. She had gone, partly because she felt that nobody could so well see that the doctor's directions with regard to Eunice were carried out, and partly—Mr. Penroyd felt that, and it hurt him cruelly—because she wanted to escape from him. She need not have been afraid. Even if he had not known that her husband was still living, he would not have worried her with his importunities.

But a dreary place the town seemed without her. How terribly he missed her at every turn! He chafed at her absence, and its uncertain length, and then he took to preaching patience and resignation to himself, and so worked out a sermon that he delivered to his people. Composing the sermon did him good, and worked his troubles off a little. I never heard that his people were much benefited by it. They were lost in amazement that their Parson should take such a theme, for neither patience nor resignation were family virtues of the Penroyds, nor qualities in which the Parson himself particularly excelled.

Mrs. Thwaites, when commenting on Mrs. Glynne's staying with Reuben Deane, had said that she wondered how a born lady, who had not been brought down in the world, could put up with Mr. Deane's skinflint ways. But there was nothing

very much to put up with. Reuben Deane had been growing more and more liberal as Eunice had grown older. Now, in breaking away from his old home, it seemed easier to break from his old habits, and to commence housekeeping on a better scale than he had ever done yet.

They took lodgings in town for a few weeks, while they were house-hunting. Reuben Deane had decided on remaining in town for some years, till Eunice had finished her education, and the doctors had done what they could for her. The house-hunting was a work of some difficulty. Small as London was, compared to its present size, the facilities for getting about were small, too. The hackney-coaches were tedious, the stage-coaches ran at very distant intervals, and omnibuses and cabs were unknown. The task would have been easy had it not been for the craving of Eunice for fresh air and greenery, and the

doctor's fiat that the former was essential to her recovery; and at last they took a house near Kew, looking full on that wonderful river of ours. It was an old-world place, one of a line of others—fishers' cottages, mixed up with dwellings of a better class, and a rough, homely population, with a maritime air about them, dwelling in the former. A broad gravel path between their house and the river, and elm and pollard trees growing thereupon. There was a roomy, comfortable carriage bought, in which Eunice could visit her doctor when necessary, and there were masters engaged to give her such lessons as her health permitted her taking. There was a good school near, at Chiswick, from whence they came. It was not on the Mall, so it cannot have been the one where the immortal Becky Sharp made such good use of her time; but the masters employed there were as good. And twice a

week Monsieur Leneuf and Signor Verdi came to teach Eunice French and Italian, when they had finished with their pupils at Pallas House.

When they were settled in their new house, Reuben Deane wrote formally, and a little stiffly, to Guy, telling him he should be glad to see him whenever he could come. Guy's only leisure-time was on a Sunday, but he thought it only due to Mrs. Glynne, at least, to call on her. When he went she told him she was on the point of returning to Thorpe Leigh ; Eunice could spare her now, and her people and her duties wanted her. Besides, though she did not tell him this, she thought that by this time Parson Penroyd would have become reconciled to his disappointment. Eunice he did not see ; she was confined to her room with some slight indisposition. Reuben Deane was coldly, formally civil, in his usual hard, dry manner ; asked

him to stay to dinner, which Guy did not care to do, as he should be leaving Dick alone, and there seemed no likelihood of his seeing Eunice. Then he went back, a little disappointed, and Dick was as much so when he found that, not having seen Mary Ann, he could give him no tidings of her.

‘I don’t know that it much matters, though,’ said Dick, mournfully. ‘I’ve been able to do nothing for her. I’m not a bit nearer finding *him* out than I was when we first came to London. I’m a poor fellow ! I’ve been able to do nothing for her. I should feel ashamed, if I saw her, to look her in the face—I wonder if she’s fretting.’

After this, Guy did not care to go to Chiswick. Mrs. Glynné was away, Eunice was fast fading from his memory ; and as Reuben Deane had not included Dick in the invitation he gave Guy, and Guy was much fonder of the society of the latter

than of the former, there was nothing to tempt him to do so. He was making his way fast in the counting-house of Orr and Reid, but it would be a long day yet before he would be rich enough to buy back his father's acres, even if they were in the market, and Squire Chalcombe seemed thriving and prosperous again.

But one day George Glynne called him into his own room, and, closing the door, said :

‘ I have a little commission for you, Thurstone. I want you to go to Chiswick—we have had some deeds and bonds here for the last two years—ever since Mr. Deane came to London, in fact, and he thinks now of taking them into his own keeping. He has asked us to send them to him by you, as a sure hand likely to bring them safely. Will you run down to-day with them ? The Windsor coach starts in

an hour, and will put you down very near the old gentleman's house.'

'I shall be ready, sir,' said Guy, looking at the bulky parcel. 'It's a long time since I have seen Mr. Deane. I hear from Mrs. Glynne that he is likely to stay near town.'

'When did you hear from my mother last?' asked Mr. George Glynne, sharply.

'Only a week ago, sir,' was the answer.

'Any news? I have not heard from her for some time—I suppose it's my fault—perhaps I don't write as often as I should. Is there anything stirring in the little town?' asked George Glynne rather anxiously.

'Nothing, sir. It is as quiet as ever. There has not even been a robbery, or an attempt at one, since the attack some years ago on Mr. Deane.'

'Ah! I remember my mother telling me of it when she wrote. He had better take

care of himself now he is near London. The roads are dark and lonely in his neighbourhood. And as to these bonds and deeds—he *will* have them, but I think, Thurstone, they would be better in our strong chest than in any place he is likely to have in that house of his.’

‘I only wonder Mr. Deane has left his papers so long with you, sir. He has the character of never trusting any one but himself,’ said Guy.

‘Well, I hope he will take good care of these,’ said George Glynne. ‘However, once you have put them in his hands, we shall have no further responsibility.’

He spoke peevishly—it was a habit that had been growing on him of late; he looked worried and troubled, and yet business was increasing, and his wife had lately presented him with a son, to the great delight of his grandparents and herself. George Glynne ought to have been one of

the most satisfied of men, but there seemed always some inward trouble.

However, Guy had little time to think of the cares of the junior partner. He put Reuben Deane's documents carefully in a leather bag, and started with them for Chiswick. He got off the coach at Kew Bridge, and walked up by the riverside. Reuben Deane's house was in a primitive neighbourhood, and there is little alteration in it, even at the present day. The cottages were old-world buildings, roomy and with some pretence to homely comfort, with panelled walls and great cupboards in their corners.

The public-houses, and there was no want of them, were bright, it being summer, with flowers, and had accommodation for pleasure-parties. Tradespeople would drive down here in their tax-carts, boats would come from London and Hammersmith, and their oarsmen require

refreshment, so that, in fine weather, the little inns did well enough. There were a few good houses mixed with the smaller ones, and Reuben Deane's house was the last on the small embankment. Beyond his house stretched nursery-grounds and fields till you came to Chiswick proper—the quaint little town, with its picturesque old church, in whose churchyard Hogarth rests, in company with the great court-painter, who had disdained him for his son-in-law, and Dame Thornhill his wife. Did the knight and the dame ever think that their last resting-place would be unknown and unremembered but for the accident that that vulgar little man, their son-in-law, shared it with them?

The population on this little embankment was, as regarded the plebeian majority, of that maritime character which, somehow, the neighbourhood even, of a river, is sure to infuse. The very women had a

weather-beaten look, and they lounged at their cottage doors, or gathered in groups outside the public-houses, in as free and easy a fashion as if they were inhabitants of a fishing-village by the sea. They looked like sturdy sea nymphs every one of them. As to the men, they had an easy time of it when not fishing. After they had dragged their nets in the early morning, they left their wives to dispose of the produce, and basked in the sun outside, or in cold weather went into the public-houses, for warmth and a gossip. The girls nursed the babies, or went out to work in the market-gardens; and the boys, on the whole, had the most splendid time of it that it is possible to conceive.

Below the broad gravel path of the embankment ran a wide margin of grass, where the river deposited miscellaneous debris. A dead pig, it might be—cats and dogs *ad libitum*—driftwood in abundance;

and the old ladies in the almshouses that adjoined the public-house, looked upon this as their especial treasure-trove. But the green, as it was called, was a fine playground for the boys, big and little. Ankle-deep in the mud they waded—happy boys, with no boots or stockings to trouble them ; or they borrowed one of the fishing-boats and went out for a sail. If upset, what did it matter ? every urchin could swim. The water was as much their native element as the land. There were no Board-schools in those days, and nothing short of compulsion would ever have made these amphibious youngsters go to school. They ran riot on the embankment, they shouted, roared, and took possession of the whole place. If they had a quiet fit, when it was high tide, on a summer's eve, they would angle in the river with a cork and a pin ; and picturesque enough they looked, with their bare legs dangling down the brickwork of the em-

bankment, perhaps the water coming up to their ankles, and a cottage half covered with magnolia or wisteria, or the neatly-curtained windows glowing with geraniums, for a background.

All the old people said there never were boys so bad. I know not how that may be—the wickedness of male urchins under sixteen always seems to me to be immeasurable in quantity—but I doubt if ever were boys so happy. River and green and terrace, all at their command, an occasional trip in a coal barge to Newcastle, stones to throw, girls to scare, old women to worry—no school, no church, no parson—what could any set of young heathens want more?

That was the name one of the neighbouring clergy had given the whole population of the embankment, with the exception of the few whose houses had some claims to respectability. They were

some distance from a church—the embankment, indeed, forming a sort of ‘no man’s land,’ spiritually—so that the souls on it formed no one’s especial spiritual cure. The clergyman I have mentioned was a curate, and evangelical, and it was pathetic to hear his description of these waifs and strays.

They were not bad, neither the men nor the boys, but they were stolidly indifferent to the claims of the Church, the necessity of sermons. They treated the curate with a rough civility. It was his business to preach, but it was not theirs to listen. They puzzled him, and being fallible—as even vicars, much more curates, sometimes are—he lost his temper, and said they had lost their souls.

It had never occurred to the worthy man, as it never occurs to many a man as worthy in this our day, that before a man thinks of saving his soul, he must feel that he has a soul to be saved. He gave up

the task of converting these aborigines of the Thames, in despair, said once more they were heathens, and washed his hands of them.

Guy knew nothing of the curate and his troubles, and as he walked along the embankment this bright autumn day, he only thought how beautiful the river was, with the great stately barges floating on it, and the crowd of fishing and sailing boats at the side. When he came to Reuben Deane's house, he saw a man outside with a broom and a barrow, sweeping up the leaves that had already fallen from the two tall poplars which stood before the house, flanking the steps that led from the embankment to the river.

The man had a sullen, heavy look, and he was doing his work in a careless fashion. He left off as Guy came up, and glowered rather than looked at him.

Some feeling of physical repulsion came

over Guy, a sensation as if at one time or another he had come in contact, or rather in collision, with this fellow ; and, ransack his memory as he would, he could not find the slightest trace of him.

Some boys were passing on their way home to dinner from one of the market-gardens. Now and then, when the youngsters of this part wanted a little money for a special purpose—a bonfire on Guy Fawkes' day, a shilling or two for their private spending, they would offer their services to the neighbouring gardeners. These industrious fits were very short, for the population on the small embankment were fairly well-to do, and, whether they worked or not, the boys were sure of enough homely food to eat ; but still, they did work now and then, and perhaps, on the whole, found it rather less laborious than play.

‘Paddy!’ cried one, and the whole troop

echoed the cry. They varied it by asking the man, who was evidently Irish, how he was off for potatoes, and when he would sell his pig. They ran on as they jeered the Irishman, who rushed furiously after them, and caught the last—the smallest and youngest of the troop.

He was not brave enough to stand by his misdoings. He began to whimper, and repeat abjectly that it was not he who had been the offender.

The especial boy who is caught in such cases is *never* the culprit.

Guy looked on as he stood at the door, with a little amusement, feeling that the lad would be none the worse for condign punishment; but he was not prepared for the brutal violence with which his captor struck him, nor the curses he lavished on the head of his victim.

‘I think he’s had enough,’ said Guy, interposing.

The man turned on Guy—a fierce, almost savage, look in his eyes, and, in the look, something of recognition that was strange, as, on his side, Guy never remembered to have seen him before.

‘I’m thinking,’ he said sullenly, ‘that if your life was plagued out of you by these young devils, the same as mine is, you’d be none so ready to let them go. There’s no peace for daycent payple where they are. But get along with you, you young omadhaun, as the gentleman thinks you’ve had enough. He knows more about the likes of you, I dare say, than meself.’

He turned away with a sneer on his evil, ugly face; and the boy, touching his forelock to Guy—his cap had fallen off in the fray, and was floating off in the river—ran to a safe distance; then he shouted, ‘Look sharp with your sweepin’, Paddy, or the pigs will eat up all the ’tatoes,’ and went on with an easy mind to his own dinner.

Guy knocked at the house-door before which he stood, and saw the Irishman wheel his barrow into the garden by a side-door in its wall which extended some yards beyond the side of the dwelling.

‘The old gentleman has a pleasant serving-man,’ thought Guy. ‘If Hannah is with him still, they must make a charming couple.’

The door was opened, not by grim old Hannah, but by a tidy, rosy-cheeked housemaid, who ushered Guy into a room fitted up with a few bookshelves, and an office table, and looking pleasantly on the river ; and there sat Reuben Deane, as grey and as grave as ever. He held out his hand to Guy, and motioned him to a chair.

‘I have brought you the documents, sir, which have been in Messrs. Orr and Reid’s charge.’

‘Thank you, yes. My reason for leaving

them with them so long, was that I was undecided about returning to Thorpe Leigh. I have now settled to remain here for some years longer. The London doctors have done my niece more good than I could have hoped for. They have had hundreds of me, but they have earned it, every penny. Now, it is her wish to make up for lost time, and continue her studies. I have never had much learning myself, but it is right that she should have the training suitable to a young gentlewoman of good fortune.'

He took the parcel, broke the seals of the outer wrapper, and examined the documents one by one.

'Enough here to make my girl a rich woman,' he said presently; 'fit to match with the richest squire in the West Country—with Squire Chalcombe himself, if he were young and free,' he added, with a peculiar smile.

‘I am very glad to hear that Miss Clare is so improved in health,’ said Guy, wondering whether the old man would give him the chance of judging of the improvement for himself.

‘Ay, ay, she will do,’ he went on, looking over his papers. ‘They are all safe, and they are worth a great deal. Here are two’—he touched two small sheets of paper—‘that are worth a man’s life.’

He put them aside from the rest, enclosed and sealed them, then wrote something on the enclosure.

‘Now I should like you to come with me, and see where I keep these matters,’ he said. ‘Life is uncertain, and though George Glynne is a good young man—so good that one wonders how he came of such a father, still I should like to have my papers under my own charge—not his. Things are left pretty much to Mr. Glynne, are they not?’ he added, rather sharply.

‘More so, certainly, than when I first entered the service of the firm,’ answered Guy.

‘Ah! I thought so—I thought so; and good as George Glynne is, the best of us have our weak points. Will you come with me, Guy Thurstone, and see where I put these papers of mine?’

Guy followed him upstairs. The whole house, as far as Guy saw, was comfortably—even handsomely furnished. He caught a glimpse of a drawing-room on the first-floor, which looked pretty enough for any young lady's occupation. He wondered if Eunice was in it. Reuben Deane opened a door on the opposite side of the corridor, and led the way to a sparsely-furnished bedroom, looking on the garden which ran round the side and at the back of the house. He closed the door carefully. He shut the window, and then said:

‘Now I am going to show you where,

in case of my death, you will find these papers.'

He touched one of the panels, and it sprang back, disclosing an iron door; he unlocked this, and there was a cupboard in the thickness of the wall.

'Old houses have their good points,' said Reuben Deane. 'I slept in this room a twelvemonth before I became aware of the existence of this cupboard. I don't believe any one would ever detect it. I suppose it must have been used for some such purpose as I am now about to put it to. But, even if any one discovered the secret of the panel, they would not easily force open the door. A better lock I never met with.'

Guy looked at the cupboard carefully. It was large enough to have held ten times as many papers as Reuben Deane was placing in it, perfectly dry, and with a good thickness of brick in the outer wall.

‘Is there any projection outside?’ he said; ‘anything to lead any one to suspect the existence of such a place?’

‘Nothing—nothing whatever. I don’t suppose any one knows of it but myself. When the landlord was showing me over the house, and pointing out all its various conveniences, I don’t believe he overlooked a closet or a shelf; but this he never told me of. I should say he was not aware of it himself. Some former tenant, finding the wall so unusually thick, must have had this cupboard made as a hiding-place. It could not have been used for years when I discovered it, to judge by the layer of fine dust that had accumulated.’

‘Yes, it seems safe,’ said Guy; ‘but, do you know, sir, I like our iron chests better.’

‘And I don’t like any iron chest,’ said the old man, testily, ‘of which George Glynne has the key.’

‘He wouldn’t open sealed papers, sir.’

‘There are some sealed papers there that I wouldn’t trust him with if he had the chance,’ was the answer. ‘These are they, Guy Thurstone. If, in case of my death, you come here, send this’—he took up the small enclosure he had made and showed it to him—‘to Parson Penroyd. I’ve directed it to him, and I’ve written inside, “To be made such use of as you think fit in the best interests of Mrs. Glynne.” These papers are worth a man’s life now, as I told you; they won’t be worth so much when I’m gone; still, even then, wisely handled, they may scare a villain, and let a good woman end her days in peace. In a few days, Guy Thurstone, I shall have another key made to this door, and I shall write to you to come here when it is done, that I may place it in your hands; so that if anything befalls me, and my key cannot be found, you will have access to these papers

and can remove them to what you may consider a safer place.'

'I don't think much of this one,' said Guy, bluntly.

'Then I do,' replied the old man, testily. 'No one will ever find out the door, and if they do find it out, they can't open it.'

'They might work away at the wall at the back.'

'Stuff!' cried Reuben Deane. 'Who would think of pecking away at the back of a house for the chance of finding anything hidden in the walls? You're over-cautious——'

'And your room is not very far from the ground,' added Guy, looking out of the window into the garden.

It was not very large, and a belt of shrubbery and a flower-border ran round it. There was a lawn, with a mulberry-tree loaded with fruit at one end of it, and a rustic seat beneath. The mulberry-tree

was very large and old, and in the thickness of its dense mass of leaves Guy saw something stirring, and presently saw the man who had been sweeping the leaves outside descending from the upper branches of the tree, with a basket of fruit.

As he came down, Guy felt rather than saw that the man's eyes were fixed on him, and that he was taking in the fact that he was with Reuben Deane in the bedroom of the latter.

'I don't like that man-servant of yours,' he said sharply.

Reuben Deane laughed.

'I do—perhaps because he is like me : nobody ever has a good word for him.'

CHAPTER XI.

THE PRINCESS.

As they came out of his bedroom, Reuben Deane pointed to the drawing-room door, which was now closed.

‘Go in there for a little while—I’ll join you presently.’

And when Guy opened the door, he saw, by the bay-window of the room he entered, a slight, tall, girlish figure looking out upon the river. He crossed the room, and, on hearing his step, the occupant of the room arose, and with a staid, grave dignity, full of a certain sweet gracious gentleness, advanced to meet him.

Could *this* be Eunice Clare—the crippled child he had carried in his arms ; the lame, halting, plain girl, who seemed set aside by her infirmities and her want of all the bloom and joy that is girlhood's best attraction, from all thoughts of love, all possibilities of marriage? *This* was a queen among women, a creature to be worshipped rather than loved, were it not for the sweet, tender, tremulous mouth, and the soft, changeful colour of the cheek.

She was tall, and her dark hair was gathered in a great knot behind, with a large tortoiseshell comb. The front hair was arranged in short curls, and from the low dress rose the fair shoulders and the slender neck in a perfect line.

The dress of that time looks ugly enough now—nay, it *was* ugly ; it had an ugliness inherent in itself, and not caused by any change of fashion or altered tastes. Compared with any style of dress, from the

mediaeval years downwards, the costume of women in the first quarter of our century was the most detestably hideous and unsightly that was ever devised. But still, perhaps from its very scantiness and hideousness, a really beautiful woman had a greater advantage over the less favoured of her sex than she possessed at any other time, with the exception of the days of the ancient Greeks, of whose attire this mode of dress was just as hideous a travesty as a monkey is of a man. The long, straight, scanty skirt became classical drapery on a figure whose outlines were perfect. The beautiful line from ear to shoulder, with no covering to mar it, no intrusive curl to break its form, could never have been so well displayed by any other mode of dress.

Eunice Clare had a perfect form and a perfect skin, and no dress whatever could have given her so great an advantage over

her compeers as did the tasteless, skimped, scanty toilets which were then in fashion.

‘I expected you, Mr. Thurstone,’ she said with a smile, which softened and lit up the whole face. ‘My uncle told me you were coming. It is very long since I have seen you.’

Guy stammered something, he hardly knew what. He felt awkward, confused, and abashed before this stately young maiden. So stately, yet so sweet. A born princess, made to rule over men’s hearts in right of her beauty and her graciousness. And to think that he had held her in his arms, carried her across a muddy road, lifted her into her uncle’s phaeton, shown her the careless kindness that young men show to children and think no more of it or them.

He should think, all his life, of her, now.

He felt shy, awkward, and abashed. He had seen very little of women, no-

thing at all of ladies, with the exception of Mrs. Glynne. He had had no society open to him in London, with the exception of Miss Watts and the people that he met at the house of Mr. John Thwaites; and the buxom young damsels who sometimes brought their work and stayed to tea with Mrs. John were creatures of another stamp altogether to Eunice Clare. And of bad women he had seen nothing, either. Dick and he, in their London life, had kept clear from all temptations and coarse sin. They had each his devoir to do, as truly as ever had knight of old, and while doing it they turned aside neither to the right hand nor the left.

He did not know how to talk to this beautiful young queen. The little vapid things that many a man would have uttered and thought worthy her hearing, he could not say. Would she care for them if he did? How should he address her? What

words were good enough for such a creature ?

Eunice was mistress of the position, however. In her heart she was as fluttered as Guy. But then he had been her prince and her hero for years, whereas it was all of a sudden that she had become his lady and queen. She spoke about the river and its beauty, the loveliness of the sunsets turning the dull colourless water into sheets of molten gold, the tender, soft charm of the skies. I wonder how many English people know how well the skies above the Thames are worth painting. In after life, Guy Thurstone went up the Rhine and on the Hudson, travelling a great deal and seeing much world-famed scenery, but there was never a river to him like the Thames as it flows near Kew ; for never was river whose praises were so sweetly sung by his lady and princess.

Presently Reuben Deane came in, and

after a time Guy felt that he must go. He had stayed too long already for manners, he felt. He held out his hand to Eunice, and she took it, and her doing so made him happier than he had ever been in his life. Reuben Deane told him, with his grim stiff civility, that they should be glad to see him when he came that way, but he did not press him to stay. Guy made a very decided resolve to avail himself of the old man's invitation, and went down the stairs feeling the touch of Eunice's fingers thrilling through his frame. Something had come into his life that made it altogether different from whatever it had been before. Something else came, too, before he left the house, for as the neat little housemaid opened the door, a dapper smart young gentleman came in with an air of being quite at home, and he asked for Miss Clare in the most every-day manner, as if she were the most every-day

person in the world. He was so insufferably well dressed, so impertinently good-looking, so thoroughly satisfied with himself, that Guy felt it would be an immense relief if the usages of society permitted him to throw the dandy into the water. What did he want with Miss Clare? What business could he have with her? Guy never felt in such a rage with any one in all his life before.

And the poor young man had done nothing but look very nice, very smart, very well contented with himself, and very pleased when he heard that Miss Clare was at home and in the drawing-room.

CHAPTER XII.

'THE OTHER FELLOW.'

GUY walked at a furious pace towards Turnham Green. A dim idea of taking the stage coach as it passed through that then suburban village crossed his mind, but he was not very clear as to his movements. Presently he met a young lady, who smiled and bowed, looked very pleased to see him, and held out her hand. This was Mary Ann Smith, and she kept Guy in talk about Thorpe Leigh and the people there, and then she fell to talking of herself. Guy looked handsomer than ever, she thought ; even without being so foolishly in love with

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him as she had once been, it was very pleasant to see him standing there with those fine dark eyes of his fixed on her. She was very happy at Mr. Deane's, she told him. The old gentleman had improved very much. Nobody could call him niggardly or miserly now. He was careful, of course—that was a habit, she thought, that he could not get over—but he was very liberal, too, and he spared nothing upon Eunice. Had she not grown and improved? Who could have thought that the London doctors would have done her so much good! and when she married the Squire that was to be of Chalcombe Grange—What! didn't Guy know that? It was the talk of all Thorpe Leigh. Her mother had written to her about it. He was only a Chalcombe by the mother's side—not so much so, indeed, as Mr. Thurstone himself. His mother was second cousin to the Squire, and she lived

at Bath, near the old ladies, and they had got very fond of this young man. And they had promised the Squire that if he would make young Mr. Rae his heir, they would help to pay off the mortgages on the estate, so that it should all be clear. It was a great shame, when Mr. Thurstone was so much nearer kin. And Mr. Rae was staying in London now. He was at the bar, eating his terms, and he was very often at Chiswick; and she was sure that things were as she said, for—but this was in confidence, Mr. Thurstone mustn't repeat it—one day, when Mr. Deane was in an extra good humour, she, Mary Ann, was laughing, and saying she should not be wanted much longer, for Eunice was growing so well and blooming she would be sure to marry, he had said, 'Not yet awhile;' and then, half below his breath, 'If she is to marry the Squire of Chalcombe, she must wait.' And, of course, as

the present Squire was married and a great deal too old, who could he mean but young Mr. Rae ? She must go away now. Young Mr. Rae was expected there that day ; he was coming to dinner. Most likely she should find him at the house when she got back ; and so good-bye to Mr. Thurstone, and how nice it was to have had this long talk with an old friend.

Guy was never very clear how he got back to town that day ; but when Dick came home to their lodgings in Chalton Street, he found Guy by the tea-table with his head on his hands, and his elbows on the table.

He spoke little, and he ate less, during the progress of the meal ; but, when the tea-things were removed, he said abruptly :

‘ I have been to Chiswick, and I’ve seen her !’

There was only one her in the world for Dick, and he said at once :

'How is she looking? Did she ask after me?'

'I—I don't know that she did; and as to her looks—oh! Dick, what is it in a woman's face that makes you feel as if you would never forget it—that you would die for her—live for her—go to the world's end for her—sell your very soul to get her, only for the feeling that if you did anything shabby or base she would never look at you again?'

'I don't know, I'm sure,' said Dick; 'only I didn't expect this of you, Guy; and I think it is very shabby—I won't use the other word—to try and get my girl—I won't say from me, for I never expected to have her, but from that other fellow who's set his heart upon her. It is no use your thinking of coming between them,' added Dick, flashing up in defence of the 'other fellow,' whose love affairs he considered to be in his especial keeping, 'for she's set her

heart on him, and she won't have anything to say to you.'

Dick felt and looked as ill-used as if Guy were his own rival instead of rival of that unknown whom he had been unable to discover.

Guy stared at him in amazement; then he said firmly :

'That remains to be seen, Dick. I think I'm as good as that other fellow, every whit, and I mean to try a fall with him, I can tell you.'

'Then you'll have to try a fall with me,' said Dick, sullenly. 'Though the fellow has cut me out, still, when he's been in love with her for three years, and she with him——'

'Who on earth are you talking about, Dick? I mean Eunice Clare—I've seen *her*—and, Dick, I never understood you before when you spoke of Mary Ann Smith, but I do now, and I'm very sorry for you.

But you're a better fellow than I am. I would never have given Mary Ann up as you have done if I felt for her as—well, as I have learned to feel to-day. How *could* you do it, Dick ?

'It had to be done,' said poor Dick, ruefully. 'She didn't care for me, and she did for the other fellow. Of course it was of her I was thinking when I flamed out so. She cares for him, and, you see, that makes me feel as if I was bound to protect his interests. But it will be different with you and Eunice Clare. Though how you can think of such a child—and lame, too——'

'Lame ! child ! I wish you'd seen her, Dick ;' and then Guy gave a brief description of the lady of his love. He was too reverent for many words when he spoke of her, but he dwelt very fully upon Mr. Rae, taking it for granted, and rightly, that it was he whom he had met at the door of Reuben Deane's house ; and he told Dick all

he had heard from Mary Ann, and, while doing so, he had to submit to a rigorous examination as to her looks and words and ways.

‘That young fellow has a good chance against you, Guy,’ said Dick, when the other had concluded.

‘Yes, I suppose he has,’ said Guy; ‘but I mean to try a fall with him, for all that. I shall never be Squire of Chalcombe Grange, though my claim to it is as good as his. I am nearer in blood, of the two; but you may be sure I’ll never go, cap in hand, to the present master, asking him to remember that my mother was his sister; but I may get a home yet that may be worth her sharing. She may love me for my own sake, as my mother loved my father.’

‘And she may love Mr. Rae,’ suggested Dick.

‘She *may*, but I’ll never believe she does

till she tells me so with her own mouth,' said Guy; 'and I don't think, somehow, she ever will tell me that. He may have the old man on his side—and I know Reuben Deane would think a great deal of his niece being mistress of Chalcombe Grange—but I don't think, Dick—now, don't set me down as a conceited ass—I don't think that I could feel for any girl as I feel for her if she was the sort of girl to care for Mr. Rae.'

'Any girl would care for you, Guy, if she had eyes in her head. There's no fear of Mr. Rae, but there is of the old man; and then, though she may like you, it would be a great thing for old Deane's niece to marry a Chalcombe; and I fancy young women are very much led away by this sort of thing.'

'That depends on the sort of young woman,' said Guy. 'I'm as good a Chalcombe, every bit, as Mr. Rae; though,

whatever he might do, I should keep to the name my father left me. He looks such a coxcomb, Dick.'

'Ah! she may like him the better for that,' said Dick. Then, anxious to reassure his friend, added, 'But she must be hard to please if she doesn't care for you, Guy.'

CHAPTER XIII.

MONSIEUR IS 'RESPECTABLE.'

THAT autumn Guy Thurstone developed a new taste. He became very fond of rowing. Business hours were much longer at that time than they are now, and Saturday half-holidays were unknown; but, directly he could leave the counting-house, he took the coach to Hammersmith Bridge, and there took a boat and rowed past Chiswick towards Kew, and back again.

It was very often dark before he started back; soon, dark before he passed the old house behind the trees; but there would

be a light in the drawing-room—sometimes a shadow on the blind ; sometimes there might be light enough to see a figure seated by the large bay-window, and once, and *that* was happiness indeed, he caught sight of Eunice herself standing by the steps that led to the river, and looking out upon the boats—*his* boat amongst them. He took off his cap and waved it, and she returned the salutation.

On Sundays he came down early and went to church at Kew. There he saw Eunice herself, with Mary Ann. Then he would walk home with them, and then get back to London again by his boat. He was shy of going to the house. Reuben Deane had been, for him, civil and even friendly ; but still, if he did want this young Mr. Rae for Eunice, he might not be pleased to see too much of Guy. He would wait a little, he thought—then he said to himself that was hardly right. Reu-

'How is she looking? Did she ask after me?'

'I—I don't know that she did; and as to her looks—oh! Dick, what is it in a woman's face that makes you feel as if you would never forget it—that you would die for her—live for her—go to the world's end for her—sell your very soul to get her, only for the feeling that if you did anything shabby or base she would never look at you again?'

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CHAPTER XIII.


MONSIEUR IS 'RESPECTABLE.'

THAT autumn Guy Thurstone developed a new taste. He became very fond of rowing. Business hours were much longer at that time than they are now, and Saturday half-holidays were unknown; but, directly he could leave the counting-house, he took the coach to Hammersmith Bridge, and there took a boat and rowed past Chiswick towards Kew, and back again.

It was very often dark before he started back; soon, dark before he passed the old house behind the trees; but there would

be a light in the drawing-room—sometimes a shadow on the blind ; sometimes there might be light enough to see a figure seated by the large bay-window, and once, and *that was* happiness indeed, he caught sight of Eunice herself standing by the steps that led to the river, and looking out upon the boats—*his* boat amongst them. He took off his cap and waved it, and she returned the salutation.

On Sundays he came down early and went to church at Kew. There he saw Eunice herself, with Mary Ann. Then he would walk home with them, and then get back to London again by his boat. He was shy of going to the house. Reuben Deane had been, for him, civil and even friendly ; but still, if he did want this young Mr. Rae for Eunice, he might not be pleased to see too much of Guy. He would wait a little, he thought—then he said to himself that was hardly right. Reu-



ben Deane had done well by him. True, in his way, he had been of service to the old man, but then he had been trusted—Reuben evidently had confidence in him. No, he would go to the house. He would carry on his wooing fairly and openly. It should never be said that his father's son did anything mean or underhanded.

Reuben Deane received him civilly enough when he went, which was on the Sunday after he had arrived at this resolution. He went straight into the house with the two girls, and said he would see Mr. Deane. Eunice had never asked him in. Guy felt he should not have been quite so well pleased if she had ; she was very sweet and gracious, but still there was a maidenly reserve about her, so that Guy felt his wooing would not be all smooth sailing. He should have enough to do to win his princess. All the better, to his thinking ; maidens too easily won are seldom worth the winning.

If Guy had only known that she was won already—that, from the time he had carried her, a plain, pale, crippled child, the niece of the man whom at that time he thought his enemy, as gently in his arms as if she had been his little sister, her heart had gone out to him and had never been taken back!


Reuben Deane kept him to dinner, and told him he should have come before. What a meal that was! Did the gods in Olympus ever have such a banquet? What two or three hours of happiness he spent by the bay-window in the drawing-room, looking on the river at the boats, with the two girls, while Reuben Deane, at a little distance, sat and read his Sunday paper! Reuben Deane had never been in the way of going to church or chapel. Nobody knew what he believed; perhaps, like a great many of us, he did not know himself. Of late he had suffered Eunice to read the

Bible to him, but on Sundays his paper formed his reading for the day ; and, even when in the room with the young people, it appeared to absorb him.

But in the afternoon Mr. Rae came in. He looked so debonair, so self-satisfied, so sure that he was a welcome guest, that Guy felt he hated him more cordially than ever. He did not devote himself so much to Eunice as he did to Reuben Deane, who seemed to tolerate his small chatter much as a great elderly mastiff might the grimaces and barks of a little dog. He had a great deal of small talk for the ladies, and Eunice seemed to like it. Guy wondered at her. But then she had to be civil to her guest ; though how any man could talk such inane nonsense about the opera, and the Regent, and the fashions, Guy could not conceive. Man indeed ! The creature was not worth the name. And would he never go ?

Mr. Rae did not take his departure till Guy took his, which was not till after tea. Reuben Deane told Guy to come again, but he told Mr. Rae the same thing ; and Eunice, when she said good-night, smiled on both alike. Mr. Rae, who really seemed very good-tempered, proposed that they should go on to Turnham Green, and take the coach from there to town. But Guy told him shortly he was going to walk, and strode on, leaving his companion to wonder at his doing so. Guy got home rather cross and rather tired, and found Dick sitting up for him, and very anxious to hear how Mary Ann was looking.

The next Sunday, Guy went to Kew church again, but he took a seat at some distance from the one occupied by Eunice and Mary Ann. And when the service was over, instead of walking home by their side, he followed them at a discreet distance. It would seem intruding to call on Reuben



Deane so soon, and if Eunice saw him she might feel that he would expect to be asked. But he could not let the Sunday pass without seeing her, and, when she had gone into the house, he loitered near, though he had little chance of seeing her again. It was something to be near the same place—something to feel that he was on the spot where she lived and moved.

'River that rollest by the marble walls
Where dwells the lady of my love, when she
Walks by thy margin, and perchance recalls
Some faint and fleeting memory of me.'

That, or something like it, was the idea in Guy's mind as he stood by the Thames that day. Surely Eunice would give him a thought, at times, when she walked by the river that had become so familiar to him. Perhaps even now she might be standing at the great bay-window; and if she saw him, would she not know that he was

there because it was near her? Perhaps she might give him a sign, a wave of her hand, a word, a greeting——

‘*Mon cher élève, comme je suis rejoui de te revoir !*’

That was not the greeting he expected, though it was uttered in a voice that was strangely familiar; and he turned, and, leaning over the palings of a small cottage, as picturesque as, but rather more pretentious than, some others, inasmuch as it boasted not only a porch, but a passage, he saw his old acquaintance and French tutor—*Monsieur*.

It was a bright, sunny day, early in November. There was fog in London, but there had only been a slight mist, like the veil of a water-nymph, over the river that day, and now it had cleared off, and left a pale blue sky, and clear, white, transparent clouds.

Monsieur was looking just himself, as

stout, as well-fed, and as much at ease as ever.

Guy shook hands with him heartily, and asked how he had come to that part of the world.

'It was your good Madame Glynne that arranged it for me,' was the answer. 'My pupils were growing fewer in that little town by the sea, and I myself was growing weary of its sameness, and I wrote and asked her if she thought I would have any chance nearer London. And she told me she thought I might do well here. The French master who had had the two great schools of the neighbourhood, and taught Mademoiselle Clare there,—he pointed to Reuben Deane's house as he spoke—'had gone back to France, and she thought I might succeed. And I do—not so badly. I have the schools—mademoiselle there does not require a French master longer—but I have various demoiselles on the

Green at Kew, and that other Green, Turn'em—at the good houses there I have four or five. Oh, I do well enough! There is one thing by which I am *géné*—I am obliged to sacrifice to *les convenances*—to be *respectable*, you call it. I must go to church—I found they thought it ill if I did not. The schools might not know; they are too far off; but there are some ladies on the green—Evangélique—but good pay; I teach four nieces there, and a dozen dear young friends in various parts, and their religion is of the strictest, but their pay is of the best; they were chagrined that Madame should be Catholique when first they knew me—I bewailed it myself—they said she was lost in night; I said so too; I thought at first they were *esprits forts*, and *they* thought I was Huguenot. If I had undeceived them, I saw I should lose my pupils. They were so pleased that I had come over from that terrible Rome!

So I felt I must go to church to content them. Did you not see me there this morning? I saw you, and you had something else to do than to look out for an old master when *she* was there. Ha! ha! *mon cher* Guy. It is a folly to which we must all bow in our time. Sooner or later it masters us. Yes, I saw you. I looked up from "Candide," and there you were, eyes bent on your Madonna.'

'You—you—take Voltaire to church with you!' cried Guy.

'Well, *mon cher*, what would you? I *must* go to church, it seems. Those good ladies would take away their four nieces else, and recommend me no more. But when I am in church, I take out my little brown book, and I study it with much content. So I never find the sermon tedious, which is more than any one else of the congregation can say, unless it may be a young man in love; and I study my Vol-

taire at my ease, and I think what would the preacher say to my good Evangéliques if they only knew what was in my little brown book ?

‘I think you and your little brown book would be better at home, Monsieur, of a Sunday morning,’ said Guy, bluntly.

‘Ta—ta—*cher garçon*. One must live, and if these dames Evangéliques will not believe that I am a good French master because I do not think as they do, is it my fault ? I bring my wife their little tracts to correct her from the error of her ways. How scared these old women are by that other old woman at Rome ! *N’importe !* they pay me well, and if it makes them happy to see me in church, why should I not please them ? After all, I can read my Voltaire there in greater peace than I can at home, where Madame is so busy with the *cuisine*. *Tiens !* you must dine with

us to-day. There is good fare. A fowl of the fattest, and a *potage* of the best, such as Madame alone can make. Ah! *chère femme!* a man must be a fool indeed who would not let his wife believe in saints and miracles, and winking eyes, and weeping virgins, a thousand times more than does Madame, as long as she makes such *potage*. And out of nothing, too! Ah! Guy, *mon cher*, what a blessing marriage is, when one has such a cook as Madame for one's wife! After all, how few of you English can know what such marriages really can be!

'*Victor, le potage est sur la table,*' sounded from the cottage in the voice of Madame.


'*Une couvrette de plus, ma chère. Voici un ami qui vient dîner avec nous,*' said Monsieur; and he took Guy into the cottage, where he found a table neatly spread, a bunch of chrysanthemums on it, and

Madame, as stout and as placid as ever, presiding at the head.

She was very pleased to see Guy. She gave him a capital dinner, waiting, herself, when necessary. She had no servant, she told him. They went on just as they had done at Thorpe Leigh. Provisions were dear, and those English girls were so wasteful, and ate like ogres. She had given up lace-mending. Monsieur had so many more pupils than at Thorpe Leigh, and they were mostly of a better class, and he thought that appearances must be studied.

'*Précisément*,' said Monsieur ; ' so I read my Voltaire in church, instead of at home, on Sunday mornings.'

If Guy could have eaten two dinners he would have been welcome, Monsieur and Madame were so glad to see him ; and Monsieur brought out a bottle of claret, and they clinked their glasses, and were very happy. Be it understood, that if



Monsieur was a heathen, like those rude fisher-folk, his neighbours, he was a good-hearted and kindly one; and after dinner he arose, and in a small basket Madame placed, very carefully wrapped in a clean, white napkin, the remains of the fowl and sausages, also in a jar the rest of the repast which they had had at dinner, and some fine white bread. Monsieur took up the basket, told Guy he had business to take him out, and he must stay to entertain Madame. He should be back long before it was time for Guy to get back to town.

As Monsieur walked along the little embankment, the young aborigines of the place raised a cry after him, 'Froggy! Frenchy! Skinny!' A number of them were standing outside one of the trim, pretty public-houses, which looked such pleasant places of entertainment for wayfarers coming from London for a little fresh air. But they were not confined to

‘travellers’ alone, by any means, and after morning service the ‘heathen’ boys, as well as men, of the neighbourhood went there—because, as in our own day, they had nowhere else to go.

Yes, there was church—church three times a day, if they chose. But they never did choose. They lounged about during the morning hours; then they dined, and afterwards, if the weather was at all fine, stood by the river, the men smoking and drinking beer out of pewter pots, and talking of the cruises they had been, of the hauls of fish they had taken, of the weather—of anything but just the topics that good people would have thought fit for the Sabbath day.

The boys collected in groups too, and, if they were in cash, oranges and sweets took with them the place of beer and pipes; and they made rude jokes on the passers-by, and sometimes indulged in a little

horse-play, but they did nothing worse; they were only rough, not bad. They might have liked some better way of spending the Sunday, if any such had been provided for them; but there was not. They had God's house, and the devil's—as many thought it—and nothing more; and the devil's house being the warmest and the snuggest, and the one where, if a man had but twopence in his pocket, he was sure of a better welcome than he would get from a stiff, starched pew-opener or a pursy beadle, why, the men went there, and the boys followed their example as soon as they had funds enough to do so.

Monsieur walked on with unruffled composure. When at a little distance from the noisy group who had been calling him names, he raised his hat, and bowed with much politeness, and he said to himself, 'The charms of an English Sunday! how still! how quiet! how beautifully holy!'

And then he went on with his basket.

He crossed Kew Green, and he knocked at the door of one of the small old houses in Kew Road, and, entering, he took his basket upstairs, where was a man huddled up in an armchair—poor and old, and a stranger in a foreign land. A French priest, who had fled to England for dear life at the First Revolution, had refused to return at the bidding of the usurper, and, when a ‘son of St. Louis’ had gone back to France, had found himself too old and feeble to return.

Monsieur had come across his compatriot, and sent his wife to him ; and, unused to outdoor exercise as she was, Madame had gone two or three times, and then, finding the exertion altogether too much for her, had said that her husband must go in her stead.

So Monsieur went every Sunday. That

was his only leisure-day; and the little basket, with some of the Sunday's daintier fare, always went too.

'He is a priest, *pauvre misérable*,' Monsieur said, with a shrug of his shoulders; 'but he is a man after all, and we were both born in France.'

Whenever Father Lacorde was better, Monsieur and he argued vigorously—of course, with the usual result.

Monsieur often wondered to his wife why a fellow who, *morbleu!* had been born with brains, could ever persuade himself he believed the childish fairy-tales of his Church. Father Lacorde was equally astonished that a man with so good a heart should be so dull of comprehension of the things best worth his knowing.

Madame told Guy where Monsieur had gone to spend his afternoon. Guy, good Protestant though he was, hoped the priest would teach Monsieur he might spend his

time in church better than in reading Voltaire.

‘*Que voulez-vous ?*’ said Madame. ‘It is for women and priests to be *dévôte*, but as for men like my husband, who expects it from them ? When I tell my beads, I repeat an Ave and a Pater for my Monsieur, and that is as good as if he said it himself. But we will not talk of religion any more. I have something else very curious to tell you. Who do you think is living here—at Brentford—close at hand ? That lawyer—that bad man who ran away with so much money—with all poor Madame T—— (no, I cannot sound it)—she who was going to marry him, but he ran off *with* the money, but *without* the wife.’

‘You mean Lawyer Snark,’ cried Guy, eagerly.

‘*Précisément*—and it was only last evening that I saw him. Monsieur provides, as you know. I do not like going out of

doors. But last night I was compelled. Monsieur had to go to Acton when his lessons were over, to settle about some new pupils—rich people that *les Evangéliques* have recommended him to. Well, he could not go to market there, nor would it do to carry a basket on his arm ; so down to Brentford I went in the afternoon. The dull dirty town ! I am sure, since the first house was built there, the sun has never shone upon it. And the market is as ugly as the town ; but I bought a good fowl there, as you know, and cheap, as prices are ; and coming home, it came on to rain—pour—*les tempêtes !* There was a covered way beneath a house, and the iron gate that led to it stood open ; so I went in, glad of the shelter. There were steps leading down to the river, and I felt so tired, I went down the steps to see if there might be a seat at the end. There was one in a tiny arbour, at the very end. There I sat,

and presently a big man came down the steps, looked round, but did not see me in my arbour. But I saw him, and I heard his voice scolding the domestic for leaving the gate unfastened. I knew the voice. Monsieur Snark had been once to see my husband. He had an investment to propose, but — *pas si bête!* — he did not get *our* money to add to the rest. But I had fear. He is a bad man, and I got up the steps. It makes me pant now to think how quick I did it, for, the minute after, I heard the gate closed. The *bonne* must have locked it. So *voilà!* take Monsieur Snark, if he is wanted by any of your good people at Thorpe Leigh.'

CHAPTER XIV.

THWAITES AND NEPHEW.

GUY did not wait for Monsieur's return, for the priest and he had got into one of their interminable arguments, and, when Monsieur once found a combatant worthy of his steel, he was apt to forget the march of time. So, after a cup of Madame's excellent coffee, Guy took his departure, promising to come soon again to see her—a promise which Madame told him, with a good-humoured significance, he must be sure to keep. There was doubtless attraction enough by the river-side to bring him there again, shortly.

Guy turned through a narrow lane, a yard and a half wide, that ran between two of the houses. Madame had told him he would get to the high-road, where he would meet the coach—he had given up his design of walking home—more quickly that way; and he found himself in the midst of a cluster of cottages, as old and as primitive as, and with something of the same maritime air that distinguished, those on the embankment. They were fairly neat and comfortable, too, some with perfect hanging gardens of geraniums and plants in pots on shelves outside their walls. The place was quiet enough, but here and there a man, for whom the public-houses had no attractions, stood lounging at his door, smoking his pipe. The air was mild and soft, though it was November; and, the boys having all gone in to their tea, there was an air of Sunday quietness about the place, much as there is in a well-ordered

village, where squire and squiress do their part in concert with the parson. But there was one figure that spoilt the scene—a man, dirty, bearded, with a short pipe in his mouth, standing at the closed door of a cottage, and possessing the malevolent air of a being who is in a chronic state of dissatisfaction with everything in the world around him. Guy thought he knew the face, and presently recognised it as belonging to Reuben Deane's Irish serving-man.

Another moment, and the door of the cottage against which the man was leaning opened, and the trim, well-kept figure, in good greatcoat and well-brushed beaver, of George Glynne, came out. He closed the door quickly behind him—not so quickly, however, but that there issued from the cottage a fierce yell, such as might be uttered by some one in madness or the delirium of fever, and some dis-

cordant words, amidst which he caught, 'swing by the neck till I'm dead!'

George Glynne saw him, and looked confused. He came up to Guy, and stammered out:

'I hardly expected to see you at this part of the world. You have been dining at Mr. Deane's, I suppose?'

'No—with another friend,' said Guy, smiling to himself at the thought of what his respectable, church-going employer would think of Monsieur and his Voltairean tenets. 'I am going home now, and want to catch the coach at Turnham Green.'

'Ah!' said George Glynne, with a little air of relief, and keeping close to Guy, as if he did not want to lose sight of him, 'that is my way too. I came down here to see—a—a—an old acquaintance in fact, who has seen better days.'

George Glynne never cared for poor people, or shabby ones—that was well known—so

Guy was a little astonished at this new form of benevolence, which the good young man seemed rather ashamed of, whereas, in general, George Glynne was not the one to hide his light under a bushel.

What could bring him down to that out-of-the-way little cottage, away from his comfortable home and his wife? And George Glynne looked uncomfortable—not at all like a man who has been on an errand of mercy. And how was it his friend lived in the same house as that unpleasant-looking Irishman? for George Glynne had scarcely closed the door behind him when the other opened it, and immediately, cries and yells, as before, were heard on the quiet autumn air.

‘If that is your friend, I should say he has a bad attack of brain-fever,’ said Guy.

‘Yes — yes — very bad indeed,’ said George Glynne, hurrying on out of the


way of the discordant sounds—‘very bad, and yet’—these last words were not uttered hopefully—‘the doctor says he may recover. Do you often come to this part?’ he added quickly, looking suspiciously at Guy.

‘Well, rather frequently. Mr. Deane has been good enough to give me a general invitation, and to-day I discovered the friends with whom I have been dining, and they, too, wish me to come when I can.’

‘It is a long way for you on a Sunday,’ said Mr. George, in a tone of pious rebuke. ‘*Mine* was an errand of necessity, nay, of mercy.’

‘Oh, I’ve been to church at Kew, in the morning,’ said Guy; ‘and Sunday is my only day for visiting the friends I have here.’

Mr. George Glynne did not appear quite satisfied. There was still an air about him as if Guy did not spend his Sundays quite as they should be spent; but he walked on



without saying anything further till they came to the high-road, and, the coach passing within a minute or two, he got in, while Guy rode outside, and they saw no more of each other.

Guy thought no more of George Glynne, and the new form his goodness had taken ; he was so full of the strange news Madame had told him. If Lawyer Snark was indeed at Brentford, and they could lay hands on him, something might be done about Mrs. Thwaites's money. It would be worth the trial, not merely for her sake, but for poor Dick's, who was stinting himself of all but the merest necessities in order to help his mother.

Guy ran upstairs, meaning to tell Dick the news at once ; but, when he saw Dick, he felt that he had something of importance to tell *him*, and that it would be as well to let his friend empty his budget first.

‘ I thought you never were coming home,’

said Dick. 'I hurried away directly tea was over at my aunt's, thinking that, as you said you would not go into Mr. Deane's, you would be here waiting for me. And I have been waiting for you ! and I have such news ! What do you think ? No, you will never guess it. My uncle is going to take me into partnership. What do you say to that, Guy ?'

'That he's a wise fellow, and you're a lucky one,' was the answer.

'Well, I think you're right about both of us,' said Dick ; 'I shall do my best, as I've always done it, but now I shall have more of a voice in matters ; perhaps I shall be able to make the concern pay better. I was born to be a builder ! You'll see, my uncle will never be the poorer for giving me a share in his profits. Thwaites and Nephew ! Doesn't it sound well ? And it shall pay well, too. And my uncle will be able to take things a little more easily than

he has done yet. Did I tell you he got in, last election, and is a vestryman? And he has never been to the Vestry, yet! But he's going next week, and it would have done you good to have heard Bobby Curtis and him rehearsing their speeches after dinner. Uncle John is going to make a stand for the old ladies' tea and sugar. Aunt has primed him. She's a good soul. And Bobby is dead against it. And if aunt puts in a word, he tells her that the "workhus is no place for fine feelins; and if the ladies had anything to do with the management of it, the paupers' heads would be turned." Then he stood up with his hands in his pockets, and made a speech a quarter of an hour long upon the sinfulness of sugar. Uncle John made another on the comfort of tea to old women. It was a regular rehearsal. And there'll be a regular battle in the Vestry, for aunt will keep Uncle John well up to the mark; so I

expect the old folks will get their tea. I'm to keep up the credit of the firm, Bobby Curtis says, while my uncle fills the new and onerous position he has taken on himself. You'd have thought Uncle John was going to be Prime Minister, at least. I must write to my mother to-night, and tell her the news. And before I write, Guy, there's something I should like to consult you about. Don't you think, now I shall be so much better off—the business has got on wonderfully the last two years, and I shall have quite a tidy income—well, don't you think I ought to take a little house, and ask my mother to come and keep it? Of course you'll go on living with us. You and I can't part, Guy. But I could do better for my mother that way, than by making her a separate allowance. You see I *do* want to lay by a little for Mary Ann. There's no knowing when she may want it. If once I could find out that

other fellow, if I have a little money by me, I shall see my way clear to doing something.'

'I think your mother would like to live in London very well,' said Guy; 'and if I'm not one too many, Dick, I should like to go on living with you, too.'

'You and I don't part company, Guy. But about my mother. I want to do all I can to make up to her for—for—well, the truth must be told—not being just as fond of her as I ought to be. I never could be genteel, and poor dear mother always set her heart upon it. I took after my father's side of the house, I suppose. So, though I've tried to do what was right, I never felt that I—I—loved her as much as a son ought to love a mother—especially when she's a widow; so if I could give her a tidy little place—say in Seymour Street, with a slip of garden behind, and, what she would like best, a front drawing-room; or in

Camden Town—there's better air out that way, and you're close to the fields—why, it would make up to her. It would look like—like—well, as if all was as it ought to be ; for you know, Guy, when you come to think of it, it's a dreadful thing for a fellow not to be fond of his mother. And I should soon get the money to furnish it, and we'll have everything as genteel as my mother can want it.'

'And I'll send in a piano as a present to Mrs. Thwaites,' said Guy. 'Dick, you are one of the best fellows going. And if you're not fond of your mother—why, you've a strange way of showing it. But now I've something to tell you in my turn. Perhaps, if all goes well, we may be able to offer Mrs. Thwaites a choice between keeping her own house at Thorpe Leigh, or yours in London.'

And then Guy told the adventures of the day, and the strange discovery that

Madame had made of the existence of Lawyer Snark at Brentford.

‘We’ll go down there to-morrow, when business is over, and hunt him up,’ said Dick, promptly.

‘We will if we can,’ said Guy; ‘but he’s a fox that it won’t be easy to unearth. I’m sure I can find the house from Madame’s description; but I won’t be too sure that we shall find him there. Still, we may come upon his traces, and then——’

‘We’ll pummel him,’ said Dick, savagely.

‘No, we’ll try and get your mother’s money, first,’ said Guy; ‘you may do as much thrashing as you like, afterwards, but let’s squeeze the fellow dry if we can.’

Then Dick asked after Mary Ann, and Guy was able to tell him that she was looking very well and very happy.

‘What a fine spirit that girl must have!’ said Dick; ‘she has had such a time to

wait, and how well she keeps up under it all! Ah! if I could only bring her and that other fellow together.'

'I should say that by this time she has forgotten that other fellow,' said Guy. 'Suppose you try your luck again, Dick.'

'If I thought there was a chance, I would,' answered Dick, 'but I doubt if there is. She was so positive she could never forget him.'

'Will you let me speak for you, Dick?' said Guy, suddenly. 'A thousand things may have happened since you first asked her to marry you. The other fellow may be dead——'

'Oh! poor dear girl—I hope not!' cried Dick, with the most unselfish tenderness for Mary Ann.

'Or he may have seen somebody else that he likes better.'

'Then, unless it's pummelling Lawyer Snark, there's nothing I should like better

than to thrash him,' cried Dick. 'The rascal! to jilt my Mary Ann!'

'Or she may have changed her mind. Girls do, you know, sometimes.'

'But not such girls as my Mary Ann,' said Dick. 'No, no, Guy—there is not the ghost of a chance—she was, as you say, very young and inexperienced when she first knew him'—Guy had said nothing of the sort, but he was not going to tell Dick so—'hardly old enough to form a proper judgment—couldn't have seen much of the world either— Still I don't think,' he added, very humbly, 'that she could be brought to look at things differently. If I did, I should just become one of the happiest fellows in the world.'

'Then I'm to speak to her if I get an opportunity?' asked Guy.

'It's no use, you'll only vex her. I shouldn't like her to think that I thought

her inconstant, or that—that he had jilted her. Girls have their bit of pride, you know.'

'There'd be no harm in trying,' said Guy.
'But, now let's see what we had better do about that rascal, Lawyer Snark.'

CHAPTER XV.

MOTHER AND SON.

Mrs. GLYNNE sat, that Sunday evening, by the cradle of her son's first-born. The child had been some time ailing; Mrs. George Glynne and the nurse seemed alike at a loss in the case—the doctor said he required incessant care and attention. Mrs. George Glynne's mother was ill, and so Mrs. Glynne had been summoned from the country to do a grandam's part by the child.

Mrs. George had gone to Russell Square to see her mother, the nurse was at church, and Mrs. Glynne was in sole charge of the

nursery. The child slept well; he was already better for the more judicious tenderness he had had from his grandmother, and he was soon sleeping soundly again.

It was seven-and-twenty years ago since she had rocked the cradle of his father. She was then little more than a girl, having been a mother at one-and-twenty. But she had already learned that, whatever happiness life might have to give, whatever joys the future had in store, must come from her child. She had not submitted meekly to her doom. She had been one of those natures—passionate, clinging, imperious, humble, who, in youth, cannot believe but that happiness is to be theirs, and who feel that without love, without some one in whom to trust, on whom to lean, the world would be a void. And she was not one to love the worthless.

Then there had come the awful waking

in her married life. Her hero, her king, her god, had proved to be the meanest, coarsest thing on whom a woman's life had ever been thrown away; and then had come passionate reproaches on her part, cruel jealousies, burning tears, hopes, prayers that he would yet redeem himself, and be what her love would have him. And this had gone on and on, the suffering that only love for the worthless can bring, the shame at loving the unworthy.

It was beating herself against a rock to try and move the hard, dull nature she was linked with, to better things. She was bruised, broken, in the effort, and at last gave in, and sat down in a sort of sullen despair, to find that life held nothing but a baby's cradle. Nothing—for love for the child's father was utterly cold and dead.

The noblest type of woman does not grow from the spaniel race. There are

limits to the endurance even of a wife. At first there was a dull horror of herself; she was frightened to look into the chamber of her own soul and see love lying there all stark and cold; and love had been the one bright pervading essence, the very centre, of her life.

But she was calm—there was an end to all the throbs, and throes, and passionate heart-beats, that had driven her almost mad. She went on living her life, doing her best by her husband, and enduring, as calmly as she might, all that the wife of such a man as Frederick Glynne had to endure. And the child was her hope and consolation.

What dreams she had dreamed by the last cradle she had rocked! She knew better now; she knew better than to set upon her grandchild the hopes that had been disappointed in her son. Sitting there, she marvelled—as so many have to

do in middle life—at the capacity for suffering, the power of endurance, that had come unto her. When she was young, it would have seemed impossible that she could have outlived her love for her husband, the hopes she had set on her son, and have found something like content after all. Yes, and something of pleasure, for there were so many in the old town to care for, so many for whom she could care; and there had come to her, as there comes so happily to some of us in after-life, a warmer, fuller, more intimate relation with nature than youth has let us know, a perception of her loveliness in all her varying moods, a dearer, a closer intimacy than we have ever known before.

Is it the great Mother's way of drawing us to herself before she hushes us off to our last sleep?

So that her life was not an unhappy one, and, thanks to Guy Thurstone, a new ele-

ment had crept into it. He was as a son, indeed, to her: such a son as she had dreamed of, and hoped for. Would the sleeping child she was watching ever grow into such a one? No, she would form no more hopes, to have them wrecked again.

In came her daughter-in-law. She was a showily-dressed, commonplace young woman, with immense faith in her own good looks, which were of that vanishing, ephemeral kind, of which not a trace is left at thirty.

Mrs. Glynne had outlasted several generations of such young women, and would outlast Mrs. George. In four or five years' time the latter would look faded and washed out, while, at fifty odd, Mrs. Glynne would still be a splendid perennial in its autumn prime.

What a pity the perennial could not give its sweetness to the old Vicarage at Thorpe Leigh! What would Mrs. George have

thought if she had known that that fine man she so admired, Parson Penroyd, was in love with 'grandmamma,' as no man living had ever been in love with *her*?

Mrs. George was reasonably fond of her baby; but it seemed much more natural that 'grandmamma' should watch by the little one than that *she* should. What else were 'grandmammass' fit for?

She was also reasonably fond of her husband, being, on the whole, a very well brought up young woman, with a great idea of propriety and decorum.

She kept the Ten Commandments, with the exception of a few little fibs and some small meannesses. She went to church every Sunday morning, and she looked after her servants, and saw to her husband's buttons, in a most exemplary manner.

And she thought she was a very good wife to George Glynne; and he thought so, too; but that poor, weak, small soul of

his would remain small and weak and poor to the end ; nay, it would become smaller and meaner, for the want of any higher or better impulse from the wife he had chosen.

Mrs. George was very pleased to see that baby was so much better, and ‘mamma was better too ;’ so that her satisfaction was quite complete.

And, as she was not wanted in the nursery—though she had hurried home—she would just go across the road to some old friends who had asked her to come in the evening. They had had a few people to dinner—but there would only be sacred music—and she had promised to come if baby was better ; and he could not be better than in grandmamma’s hands ; and, when George came in from seeing his sick friend, he might come and fetch her. It was a long way for George to have to go to Chiswick on a Sunday ; but then, it was

his only day ; and it was to see a friend in illness.

So Mrs. Glynne remained again alone with the baby and her thoughts for another twenty minutes, when George made his appearance.

He looked tired and fagged. He had hurried off after their early dinner—unless they had company, it was always early dinner on Sundays—he had said that he had to go a little way out of town to see a sick friend ; and, on Mrs. George questioning him about his journey, had told her pettishly : ‘ Chiswick ; but not to old Deane’s.’

He did not like telling an untruth—and it was true that he had gone to Chiswick—but he certainly did not feel like a friend towards the invalid whom he had been visiting.

‘ Baby is better,’ said his mother cheerfully, and Harriet has gone out to the

Drakes'. Had you not better go downstairs and have some tea, George, before you go to fetch her ?

'No, thank you.' George looked at the child—looked at the fire—then furtively at his mother—and presently said, as if dashing with desperation into a subject he was half afraid of: 'I have seen him !'

'Him ! your friend ? Do I know him ?' she asked.

'I suppose so. I am speaking of my father,' said George Glynne. 'He is very ill, but there is every probability that he will recover. He is suffering from delirium tremens—but he'll get over it,' he added, with an impatient bitterness in his tone. 'Jem O'Brien is with him. They are in a little hovel close to Reuben Deane's. Of all places in the world, to go there !'

'How did you hear of this ?' asked his mother.

'I had a letter. I don't know who wrote

it, certainly not Jem, and I went. But my life for months past has been a burthen to me, on account of the constant fear lest, in some way or other, it should become known that my father is living, and Deane should set the law to work. If you would but have done as I asked you, mother—if you would but have taken your rightful place by my father's side, I should have been spared a great deal,' he said, fretfully.

'Possibly,' said his mother; 'and what should *I* have been spared?'

'Well, I don't defend my father. He has had his faults; but still a woman's place is with her husband. She takes him for better and worse, and if it is worse, why—why——'

'She must put up with it,' said his mother, quietly, 'as men put up with their wives when they trail the name they both bear in the mire; when they lead such

lives that their oldest friends refuse to know them any more ; when their children blush to have had such a parent, and their sons refuse to let *their* wives know of the family curse and shame.'

'It is a different case altogether,' said her son, impatiently. 'Things are altogether different between men and women.'

'Yes, I know it,' she answered ; 'so do most women.'

'And you might have done something for my father,' he said, with increasing irritation. 'When he came back to you some years ago, and asked you to live with him again, I *do* think, mother, that if you had forgotten the past, you might have done something for him. He was not young, and he was breaking ; and if you had—had—well, it must be said—done a wife's part by him, and taken him away where he had no fear of Reuben Deane, he would have led something like a decorous and


respectable life. And now, as it is, I am always afraid that, in his desperation, he will let Reuben Deane know of his existence, and that old man would have no mercy; and, if it were to be made known, and my father tried for forgery, where should I be? Why, I do believe that Harriet's people wouldn't let her live with me, if they could help it; only of course we are married, and Harriet knows her duty too well to think of such a thing. Now, mother, for the sake of that child there—for the sake of us all—couldn't you do this? and after all,' he added, piously, 'what duty is there like that a wife owes to her husband?'

'It is to be compared only with the duty a husband owes to his wife,' said Mrs. Glynne. 'We'll talk it over, George. You know what your father's life has been. Not all, for he lived his life, to some extent, before you were born, but you know

enough. You know that it has been such, that not even between mother and son can it be fully spoken of. You *know* that even now he is not penitent; ~~that~~ it is only because his constitution is failing, and his frame exhausted, that he does not lead a life to the full as bad as he did twenty years ago. Well, had your wife sinned against you one-hundredth part as much as your father has sinned against me, would you take her back, would you be content, when you had a home where you could be, at least, secure of peace, and decency, and self-respect, to give it up, and devote the rest of your days to lighten hers ?

‘But the whole thing is so different, mother, and you won’t see it,’ he said, impatiently.

‘No, I do *not* see it,’ she said. ‘I do not see why I should submit to the degradation, the horror, of leading my life again with such a being as your father.



He knows, and I know, that such redress as the law could give me I cannot claim. Those who could have witnessed against his worst infamies are long since dead. Well, by his own act he has raised up another witness, who, if need be, will free me from him. I will never return to your father, George ; I will never live under the same roof with him, and I am safe from him as long as Reuben Deane is living, and willing and able to prosecute him for forgery.'

George Glynne shook his head very mournfully.

'I did think you had a better spirit, mother.'

'We will say no more, George. Go and fetch your wife home, and leave your child to me.'

And, as the baby stirred, she took it up, and perhaps she prayed a prayer that George's son might grow up a braver man than his father.

CHAPTER XVI.

A VISIT TO MR. SNARK.

ON the Monday after Guy had dined with Monsieur and Madame, Dick and he started forth, intending, if possible, to discover Lawyer Snark, and see if he could not be made to refund some of his ill-gotten gains. They took the coach to Brentford, and then walked down the town. Brentford, as usual, was at its liveliest after dark, when the women and girls, who had been at work in the market gardens, turned out for a little social intercourse by the shop-windows, or at the entrance to the narrow courts in which they lived. One

or two of the girls looked admiringly at the young men, as the light of the oil-lamps fell upon them. The boys were playing their rough games in the streets; the men lounging in the public-houses. Then, as now, the High Street seemed taken possession of by the working-people, who looked upon it as their common recreation-ground. The house they wanted was some way up the town. They found it easily from Madame's description. There were two windows below, three above, one over the side entrance, but no door to the High Street.

'Built on purpose for a rat to hide himself in,' said Dick.

'Let's pull the bell, however, and see if we can't find our way to the rat's nest,' said Guy; and they pulled accordingly, when a tidy maid-servant with rosy cheeks, and ribbons to match, came to the gate.

'Was her master at home—Mr. Snark?'

asked Guy, thinking it best to drop the lawyer.

‘Her master was not at home, and his name was not Snark,’ said the maid-servant, looking at them with a little curiosity. There was a lamp just opposite the gateway, and its light fell on their faces.

‘I don’t wish to be impertinent, my dear,’ said Dick, ‘but I cannot think you are quite correct in what you are saying. Whatever your master’s name may be, he *is* at home—only it does not suit him to see visitors. Perhaps he is not fond of seeing them at any time?’

‘Well, he *says* he’s not at home, and he ought to be the best judge,’ said the girl, with a good-tempered smile.

‘We want to see him very particularly,’ said Dick, and he slipped five shillings into her hand.

She put it back.

‘I daren’t let you in: it’s as much as

my place is worth, and places are none so plenty hereabouts. But if you were to take a boat—you can get one at the ferry—and row along the river—the house fronts it, and—and——’

‘You’re the nicest girl I’ve seen to-day,’ said Dick. ‘You’ll keep this little matter,’ he added, pressing the money back into her hand; ‘it will buy you a ribbon or two. Come, Guy.’

They went to the ferry, and when they had hired a boat, and were in it, Guy said to his friend :

‘Suppose, after all, when we have reached the house, we find we are on a wrong scent, and Madame has made a mistake, or our bird has flown?’

‘Well, we must make the best of it if we are caught trespassing,’ said Dick. ‘I think this must be the place, as far as I can judge by the distance from the nearest

public-house ; yes, it's the place, and there's Cherry-cheeks out in the garden.'

The moon was shining full and clear, and they could see the trim figure of a girl in the small garden that lay between the house they were in search of and the river. As they neared the place they heard a man's voice calling to her to come in, and the girl answering that she was looking for parsley for garnish.

'I like that girl's principles. She means to earn her five shillings,' whispered Dick as they ran the boat in and fastened it to a stake evidently fixed for the purpose.

The girl went into the house by a side-door, and by the glimmer of light which came from the house they concluded she had left it open. They sprang from the boat, and found themselves in a small garden, consisting of a grass-plot, a willow tree, a summer-house, and a very tiny border near the dwelling, where, doubtless,

the parsley grew. In the kitchen-window they saw a light ; from the half-open door at the side they heard ‘ Cherry ripe ’ sung rather loudly by a female voice ; and looking at that as an invitation to enter, they entered accordingly, and found the damsel they had spoken to sedulously arranging the parsley she had gathered round a cold shoulder of mutton which stood on the kitchen-table.

She gave them a furtive glance, then a little scream, and stood expectant, as if wondering what next propriety required her to do.

‘Scream louder,’ said Dick. ‘We want your master, if he is at home, to hear us.’

‘He isn’t rightly my master,’ said the girl. ‘Master an’ missus let the house, an’ me with it, furnished, for a few months in the summer—master getting a situation in London, which suited him better than his place here at the Brewery ; an’ this Mr.

Brown took it, and he lives very quiet ; at least, if there are visitors, they're strange ones ; and, if it wasn't for missus, and looking after the things, I shouldn't stay here, for it's dreadful dull.'

' Susan, who have you in the kitchen ?' said a voice which both Guy and Dick recognised at once ; and, starting forward in the direction from which it came, they found themselves face to face with Lawyer Snark.

He was quite equal to the occasion. If there had been a better light than that given by the small lamp in the passage in which they stood, they would have seen that he blenched a little, and that his ruddy cheeks lost something of their glow. But he said very quietly :

' I don't know what business you have in my kitchen, young gentlemen.'

' None at all ; and we were just leaving it, to look for you, Lawyer Snark. But we

were afraid if we had come to the front-door, and asked for you, we should not have found you at home,' said Dick; adding, 'I have a little business to settle with you on my mother's account.'

'Is she thinking of an action for breach of promise?' said Mr. Snark, with a little sneer; but he led the way to his sitting-room, and closed the door carefully behind him when they had all entered.

'Not a bit of it. She's thinking that she's well rid of a rascal,' replied Dick, 'and that is a pretty general opinion. But you had a good sum of money of hers in your hands, and a great many papers; and she would be glad of them both.'

'She shall hear from me shortly; I was thinking of writing to her. How are all the good folks at Thorpe Leigh?' asked Mr. Snark, with a coolness that drove Dick almost mad.

'We haven't come here to talk about

them,' said Dick. 'Lawyer Snark, are you going to pay me my mother's money and give me up her papers?'

'Certainly not,' said Mr. Snark. 'It would be a breach of trust to do so. How do I know that Mrs. Thwaites wishes me to place so large a sum in your hands, young sir? Why, you might run off with it, and never be seen again; get married, perhaps, and settle it on your wife,' he added, with an attempt at jocularitv.

'Keep your temper, Dick; keep your temper,' whispered Guy, laying a restraining hand upon his friend, who, he saw, was ready to fly at the lawyer.

Then he turned to him.

'You know this is all arrant nonsense, Lawyer Snark. You have left Thorpe Leigh secretly, with a large sum of money and valuable papers belonging to Mrs. Thwaites in your hands. You have been hiding here, or elsewhere; and her son,

having found you, has now come to ask you to give his mother back the property of which you have robbed her.'

'And if you don't,' said Dick, 'I shall call a constable and give you in charge. What idiots we were, Guy,' he said, *sotto voce*, 'not to have brought the constable with us!'

'That is my opinion,' said Mr. Snark, who, low as Dick had spoken, had overheard him. 'If there is any question of giving me in charge, it would have been much wiser to have had the constable at hand. Go and fetch him. You'll find him at his house near the old cage; and I think it is very likely that when you two, perfect strangers to the place, ask him to take me in charge—me, an invalid gentleman staying quietly here for the sake of the boating, and paying my way, he will refuse to do it. Mr. Richard Thwaites, considering you have served your five years' apprenticeship

to the law, your knowledge of criminal matters is exceedingly small.'

Dick looked, and felt, foolish. He ought to have known better. He ought to have managed better. He should have come armed with a magistrate's warrant and a constable. Guy came to the rescue.

'It isn't too late to secure the constable now. Respectable as he believes Mr. Brown or Mr. Snark to be, I dare say he will not hesitate to take him up when given into charge, if you mention Mr. Deane, who, I take it, is likely to be as well known in this neighbourhood as the gentleman here with whom we have to deal.'

'You can try it,' said Mr. Snark, insolently. 'Which of you will go? I suppose I may smoke my pipe while waiting. Perhaps the one who is left in charge of me will take another.'

Both the young men were instant in declining Mr. Snark's offers of hospitality.

‘I won’t press you,’ he said carelessly ;
‘good tobacco, like good wine, need never
go a-begging.’

He opened a door by the side of the
fireplace, as he spoke, and they saw an im-
mense cupboard, such as is often built in
the thickness of the wall in old country
houses. There were shelves all round,
loaded with a miscellaneous litter of
household goods — crockery, jam-pots,
pickles.

‘Not so tidy as it might be,’ said Mr.
Snark, ‘but since I have not had my
daughters to look after me, I have got into
sad, bachelor ways. I must have a candle
here ; I want my favourite pipe.’

He took one from the table, and went
into the closet. It was so large, it would
have held him and two or three more,
upright. They heard him moving about,
and grumbling that he had mislaid his
pipe. The door swung-to. Perhaps Mr.

Snark did not care that they should see too many of his domestic secrets.

They whispered together as to the best course they should take, and it was settled that Guy should go for the constable, while Dick remained in charge.

'Suppose it comes to a fight,' said Guy; 'he's tough, if he isn't young. Do you think you can master him, Dick?'

'Only give me the chance,' muttered the other; 'only give me a fair excuse for thrashing him, Guy, and you'll see whether I can manage him or not.'

Guy turned to the door to go. Then it struck him, as trifles do strike us, even in the most important moments, that the other candle on the table was flaring as if in a strong draught, and there was no door open, but the door of the cupboard. Then it flashed on him that there was a singular silence in the cupboard, considering that Lawyer Snark had not yet emerged there-

from. He threw the door wide open, and saw—not Lawyer Snark, but another door directly opposite, by which that worthy must have made his escape from the house ; and there could be little doubt, had either betaken himself, by his own boat, to the river, or have crept up the covered way by the side of the house, and so have got into the street. In either case he was gone, as their further researches proved, and, for a time, at least, was able to set them at defiance.

CHAPTER XVII.

A DISCOVERY.

‘I don’t think we have managed that affair well, at all,’ said Dick; ‘and I ought to have known better, if you didn’t, Guy. To think of his having the laugh at me like that. If we had but had the constable—as he told us himself we ought to have had—the whole thing would have been right. What’s to be done now?’

‘Take counsel with an older head than our own,’ said Guy. ‘Go to Reuben Deane; tell him how we tried to catch a thief, and couldn’t, and see what he will say to us.’

‘It’s getting late,’ said Dick, doubtfully, ‘but I suppose he won’t mind—and perhaps we shall see Mary Ann. Guy, if we had but trapped that fellow, what a good thing it would have been! If my mother had her own income, I should be a rich man, and I might have done something for Mary Ann—and the other fellow.’

‘If only she would tell you who the other fellow is,’ observed Guy.

They made the best of their way to the old house by the river, and, on arriving there, were informed by the maid that Mr. Deane was at home, but confined to his room. Mary Ann came down the stairs as they were in the hall, and smiled and blushed. Guy was sure that both smile and blush were for Dick, and wondered when he would have the courage to behave as if ‘the other fellow’ had no existence.

Mary Ann was sure Mr. Deane would

see them. He had had a bad accident a week ago, had fallen down and sprained his ankle when in town, and had slept two nights at Mr. George Glynne's in consequence. He was with Mr. Glynne at the time, and that gentleman had had him taken at once to his house, and Eunice and she had been to see him there, and brought him home with them. They hoped he would be able to come downstairs tomorrow, but the doctor had advised his keeping his room till he could use his foot well. It had been a very bad sprain, and he was not a young man; and here was Eunice.

And here was Eunice indeed—tall, and stately, and fair—to say that her unele would be glad to see them, if they would come upstairs. She was reading to him when they came, but she was sure he would be the better for a little society. And then she led the way, Guy feeling as if the

old house and all within it were turned to fairyland.

Reuben Deane was in a chair by the fireplace, an old dressing-gown wrapped round him, and his ailing foot on a chair. The room was the plainest in the house. Reuben could be lavish and generous enough where others were concerned, but the habits of a lifetime clung to him, and, in everything relating to his own requirements, his habits still bordered on penury. He looked pleased to see the young men, and heard their story with much interest. Then he gave his opinion.

‘You ought to have gone to work with a constable and a magistrate’s warrant, but it is too late to say that now. Richard Thwaites, you had better sleep at the Crabtree, below here. They have good beds, I believe. We have no spare bedrooms in this house for young men; and in the morning you must go down to Mr.

Hartley, justice of the peace, at Brentford, and ask him both for the warrant and the constable. I doubt very much whether you will find Lawyer Snark. I expect he is miles away by this time, but it will be as well to try. Guy Thurstone, will you stay at the Crabtree, or go back to town to-night ?

‘Our landlady will not expect us, sir, if we are not in by twelve,’ said Guy. ‘We thought this might prove an awkward affair, though we hardly thought it would be quite so awkward as it has turned out to be—eh, Dick ? So I will take up my quarters at the Crabtree, too, and we will see, the first thing in the morning, what is to be done with Lawyer Snark.

‘Then, Eunice, I will ask you to take Mr. Richard Thwaites downstairs, and entertain him to the best of your ability, while I talk over some business matters of my own with Mr. Thurstone here.’

Guy wished that he was in Dick's place, as the latter followed Eunice down the stairs ; but he looked all respectful attention to the old man, who pulled out a large worn pocket-book, and, opening it, took out some papers, then a key, handing both to Guy.

'I wish you would put away these papers in the cupboard there,' he said, pointing to the wall ; 'they relate to some business I was transacting in the City just before my accident. I suppose that chatter-pate, Mary Ann Smith, has told you about it ? Perhaps it was lucky Mr. George Glynne was with me at the time, for, with the shock of the pain and the fall, I lost my senses for a while ; and yet I would rather have been indebted to any man's hospitality than to his.'

'It's an awkward thing to be knocked down in the City, sir,' observed Guy.

‘Yes, it is ; but it’s an awkward thing to be under obligations to anybody one doesn’t like, especially when you can’t ask for the bill and pay it,’ answered the old man, testily. ‘He got me into his house before I knew where I was ; had a doctor, and his wife, and a nurse, and all for a twist in my ankle ! If he would only have put me in a hackney-coach and sent me home ! but that wouldn’t serve Master George’s turn. He does so like doing the civil when he thinks it will pay. And I do hate a fellow that’s so damned respectable !’ added the old man, indulging in the, for him, rare luxury of an oath. ‘I got away as soon as I could ; and now, as I don’t want to use my foot more than I can help, I’ll trouble you, Guy Thurstone, to put these papers on the second shelf of the cupboard. Not the top shelf ; nothing rests there but the title-deeds of the Chalcombe lands—and I shall give them up,’ he said,

in a lower tone, 'when my girl's husband is the Squire.'

Guy bit his lip, but said nothing. It was clear that that dapper youngster, whom the old ladies at Bath favoured, was to be Eunice's accepted suitor if the old man had his way. But that way he should not have if Guy could help it. Only it would be as well not to tell him so while suffering from a sprained ankle. Reuben Deane went on muttering to himself :

'They will make her rich—my girl : she shall take her husband with her to the place from which her uncle was not thought fit to take a wife. The second shelf, Guy ; there is nothing on the top but the Chalcombe papers, and those others, which I once showed you, relating to Mrs. Glynne.'

'There is nothing whatever on the top shelf, sir,' said Guy ; 'you must have placed those papers elsewhere.'

In spite of his sprained ankle, the old man sprang to his feet, and hurried to the cupboard. No ; as Guy had said, the shelf was empty. The lock had not been tampered with ; there were no signs of violence on the stout oak lining of the cupboard, and yet the title-deeds of the Chalcombe estate, and every vestige of paper relating to it, had gone, and with them that folded paper on which, as he had once said the life of a bad man, and the freedom of a good woman, were hanging.

One wild frenzied look, one cry of impotent, despairing agony, and Reuben Deane fell, prone and senseless, on the floor.

END OF VOL. II.

BORN TO BLUSH UNSEEN.

A *Novel*.

BY

T. EDGAR PEMBERTON,

AUTHOR OF

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Berrow's Worcester Journal (Jan. 11th, 1879).—"A *sparkling and somewhat romantic chapter of a life.*"

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Wiltshire County Mirror (Jan. 7th, 1879).—"Full of brightness and humour, with here and there a touch of genuine pathos."

The Queen (Jan. 18th, 1879).—"Let us laugh and be thankful. . . once we warn off all those who cannot enjoy a piece of harmless fun from the pages of 'Born to Blush Unseen'; while we invite those wiser ones who have the good sense to enjoy an occasional bath of nonsense to take a dip in them."

Samuel Tinsley & Co., 10, Southampton Street, Strand.

Welshman (Jan. 24th, 1879).—" *A dashing and brilliant novel.*"

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Peterborough Advertiser (Jan. 18th, 1879).—" *We are confident that the reader will not regret, if he is a judicious person, the time which he bestows on 'Born to Blush Unseen.'*"

Court Circular (Jan. 18th, 1879).—" *This is a curious but an amusing narrative.*"

Western Daily Mercury (Feb. 4th, 1879).—" *This is a very amusing and interesting novel.* . . The work is one that will add to the fame of its author, and we shall be glad to meet him again in the same pleasant field of fiction."

Poole and Bournemouth Chronicle (Jan. 30th, 1879).—" *It is original in conception, and the liveliness of the 'situations,' the well-marked characteristics of the chief personages, and the well worked out dénouement are worthy of the highest praise.*"

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Sunday Times (Feb. 16th, 1879).—" *'Born to Blush Unseen' is the best thing that Mr. Pemberton has done.* Besides being original, it shows a real sense of humour, and the biography of the would-be literary man is novel and entertaining. . . We congratulate Mr. Pemberton upon his book, which shows genuine literary ability, and shall look forward hopefully to his next production."

The Globe (Feb. 28th, 1879).—" *An author who ventures to build up a plot, not upon a murder, or a mystery, or upon a young lady's back hair, but upon the foundations of a joke, is worthy of all welcome.* The author of 'Born to Blush Unseen' has done so, and his joke, moreover, is a very good one. . . *A lively piece of imaginary folly, which Mr. Pemberton has cleverly elevated from the region of farce into that of comedy.*"



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